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AN ODE.

WE are the music makers,
And we are the dreamers of dreams ;
Wandering by lone sea-breakers,
And sitting by desolate streams ; —
World losers and world forsakers
On whom the pale moon gleams :
Yet we are the movers and shakers
Of the world forever, it seems.

With wonderful deathless ditties
We build up the world's great cities,
And out of a fabulous story
We fashion an empire's glory ;
One man with a dream, at pleasure,
Shall go forth and conquer a crown ;
And three, with a new song's measure,
Can trample a kingdom down.

We in the ages lying
In the buried past of the earth,
Built Nineveh with our sighing,
And Babel itself in our mirth ;
And o'erthrew them with prophesying
To the old of the new world's worth ;
For each age is a dream that is dying,
Or one that is coming to birth.

A breath of our inspiration
Is the life of each generation ;
A wondrous thing of our dreaming,
Unearthly, impossible seeming —
The soldier, the king, and the peasant
Are working together in one,
Till our dream shall become their Present,
And their work in the world be done.

They had no vision amazing
Of the goodly house they are raising,
They had no divine foreshowing
Of the land to which they are going ;
But on one man's soul it hath broken,
A light that doth not depart,
And his look, or a word he hath spoken,
Wrought flame in another man's heart.

And, therefore, to-day is thrilling
With a past day's late fulfilling ;
And the multitudes are enlisted
In the faith that their fathers resisted ;
And, scorning the dream of to-morrow,
Are bringing to pass as they may
In the world, for its joy or its sorrow,
The dream that was scorned yesterday.

But we, with our dreaming and singing,
Ceaseless and sorrowless we !
The glory about us clinging
Of the glorious futures we see,
Our souls with high music ringing —
O men, it must ever be —
That we dwell in our dreaming and singing
A little apart from ye.

For we are afar with the dawning,
And the suns that are not yet high ;
And out of the infinite morning,
Intrepid, you hear us cry, —

How, spite of your human scorning,
Once more God's future draws nigh,
And already goes forth the warning
That ye of the past must die.

Great hail ! we cry to the comers
From the dazzling, unknown shore,
Bring us hither your sun and your summers,
And renew our world as of yore ;
You shall teach us your song's new numbers,
And things that we dreamed not before ;
Yea, in spite of a dreamer who slumbers
And a singer who sings no more.

Athenæum. ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.

GATHERED FERNS.

NUMBERLESS, seemingly, as stars at night,
These lovely fern leaves grow ; and far away,
In lone dim woods veiled from the careless
sight,

Where only nature's truest lovers stray,
They rise from out the sod with careless grace,
Flinging their brightness round each shadowy
place.

Untilled of man, they feel the soft caress
Of the warm summer wind that searches
through

The tangled tree-tops ; and their loveliness,
Born of the sun and breeze and crystal dew,
Gleams through the long-receding wintry hours,
Less fair, less fragile than the peerless flowers.

From the recesses of those grand old woods
We bring into our lives their loveliest part, —
The spirit that amid their silence broods,
And fills with peace each reluctant heart ;
And busy memory threads each path anew
Where once these ferns and soft gray mosses
grew.

We hear again the rustling of the leaves,
The long, sweet, murmuring sounds of sum-
mer days ;

See how again the sun its network weaves
O'er the gray moss that loves these pleasant
ways ;

And feel, far-searching through life's troubled
deep,
The peace, the bliss, the hope, that sometimes
sleep.

Oh, fair and solemn woods, where winds float
by

Laden with scent of pines and hidden
flowers,

Where flits the bird from shrub and tree-top
high,

Calling his mate through misty autumn
hours,

Be your dear memory bright when far away
The feet that loved your paths in exile stray !
September, 1873.

H. J. L.
Transcript.

From Fraser's Magazine.

THE PROTESTANT RESTORATION IN FRANCE IN THE LAST CENTURY.

THE revocation of the Edict of Nantes did not, as Louis XIV. intended that it should, destroy French Protestantism; but it made an important difference in its type and character. The great Huguenot exodus that supervened upon the measure of 1685 is commonly reputed to have carried off about 300,000 of the population of the kingdom; and it so happened that these consisted mainly of the middle, industrial classes: effectively, at that time, the best blood of the kingdom. It is difficult to estimate what gain might have accrued to the character of the French nation as a whole, had the paper-mills of Angoumois, the tan-yards of Touraine, the ribbon-loom of Lyons, continued to be worked in increasing proportions by a steady, sober, God-fearing race, alive to the rights of conscience, but sufficiently enlightened by common sense to discard the vagaries of superstitious fanaticism. The middle-class Protestants mostly emigrated and enriched other lands by their industries and their solid qualities. The upper class Protestants turned back to the State religion, through the portals of which alone Court favour and worldly reputation could be gained. There remained the lower classes, the peasantry and mechanics, amongst whom Calvinism might still count some hundreds of thousands of adherents; people too poor or too ignorant to think of quitting the country where they had been brought up, and too obscure to have attracted much attention to themselves had they been disposed to remain quiet. In the West and North of France they were content in general so to remain; keeping up as much as they dared the traditions of their faith, but not inviting by wilful acts the ill-will of the authorities. In Dauphiné and Languedoc, on the other hand, a hardy population, inclined to fanaticism, and worked upon by the mystic utterances of teachers drawn from their own ranks, broke out into the famous Camisard revolt. For three years, amid the rugged fastnesses of the Cévennes, some two thousand peasantry of

these southern provinces, resisted with success the efforts of the best officers and most carefully trained soldiers of Louis XIV. to overpower them; albeit outnumbered as by thirty to one, and manœuvred, not by skilled generalship, but by the supposed inspirations of their unlettered "prophets."

The phenomenon of the *Inspirés* is the most notable fact connected with this survival of Protestantism in the South of France. We have seen how, in quite recent times, a belief in visible communications with the other world is still a characteristic of the people inhabiting that portion of the realm. The Catholic pilgrimages to La Salette and Lourdes, the wild stories of the Virgin Mary's appearance on mountain slopes and river banks to shepherd boys and girls, which first incited those pilgrimages — what are these save reproductions, under other formulas, of the tendencies which helped to mould the Calvinist "prophets" and "prophetesses" of the Desert in the days of Louis XIV. and the Regency? The "prophets" first appeared immediately after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, when, the fancies of youth being heated by the tales of suffering for religion's sake which circulated among the home-steads of the Reformed, children, full of crude notions about the persecution of saints and the iniquities of the Apocalyptic Beast, wandered from village to village, uttering cries and exhibiting convulsions which the bystanders were ready to interpret as signs of inspiration. The phenomenon itself is not an unusual one. In very troublous times, when reason and order are inadequate to keep a cause alive, superstition and fanaticism, it may be, are required. The world of spirit must be grasped, as it were tangibly, or the world of sense and sight would weigh down all hope, all courage. And the more grotesque and irrational the media then available, often the more effective; for, in the syllogism of mysticism, if these shows are independent of all earthly links of cause and effect, *ergo* the more likely is it that they come direct from Heaven.

Government measures suppressed these ebullitions for a time; the childish *In-*

spirits were personally forgotten after the excitement of their day was over. But about the year 1700 a revival of fanaticism began to be talked about; and then it was that, under the influence of a race of "prophets," not children merely, but grown-up men and women, the Camisard revolt was hatched. After its suppression (in 1704) the Protestant pastors were banished, and the prophets fled the land. The "prophetesses" remained, however; and to them; for some ten years, it was mainly owing that an attachment to the traditions of the Reformation survived in the drear solitudes of Upper Languedoc. Some of these Deborahs of the "Desert" have lived on in local fame. Such were the widow Caton, Claire, and above all, Isabeau Dubois, a woman of rare charms and courage indomitable, who first roused the soul of the principal agent in the work of organic restoration, Antoine Court. From the Vivarais to the Cevennes, from the Cevennes to the Vaunage, these women wandered, preaching and prophesying. In their nocturnal assemblies they would foretell confidently a great "day of reparation;" as when a gathering together should take place in the meadow of La Cour, and a mighty tree spread forth in one night, under whose shadow the Faithful should partake of the Holy Communion, and "English people should assist at it."

Of these fitful gleams of still existing life in the "so-called Reformed religion," however, Government deigned not to take cognizance; and in 1715, a few days before his own departure from the world, Louis XIV. issued an edict proclaiming that the said false religion being dead, and its whilom adherents standing in the category of converts to the true faith, such persons must receive the sacraments at the hands of the priest, send their children to the parish schools, and in case of "perversity" would be liable to punishment as "relapsed" Catholics. The power of the Protestant rites of baptism and marriage to confer any civil *status* was altogether ignored. Now, this was an important step onward in repression. Hitherto, whatever penalties might be attached to the heretical observances,

their consequences in law were accepted. Henceforward, unless a man's marriage and his children's baptisms had taken place in the Roman Catholic Church, his wife was held to be no wife, his children to be both illegitimate and outlawed.

This edict was promulgated in March 1715. A significant commentary on it was offered five months afterwards, when some eight or nine preachers and laymen, meeting in a stone quarry near Nismes, proclaimed themselves to be the Synod of the Reformed Church of France. Many years had passed since any such token of organized life had been given by the oppressed sect. After the Revocation of 1685, a process of disintegration had set in, which, as we have seen, eventuated in the prevalence of the *Inspirés* and their wild delusions, as the only outward and visible sign of the survival of Protestantism. Of those who remained attached to its tenets in a more reasonable sense, by far the greater number either embraced the State religion as the safest thing to do, or conformed to its requirements outwardly, while maintaining their cherished doctrines in secret. There were many parts of France in which, to this extent, the germs of Protestantism still existed—chiefly, besides Languedoc and Dauphiné, in Poitou, Normandy, and Brittany—but such existence was sporadic only; and but for the energies and talents of one individual at this critical time, it may well be doubtful whether the Protestant Church would have held together so as to have had any claim to State recognition when the advancing principles of the Revolution extorted first the emancipating Edict of Louis XVI, in 1787, and then the admission to equal rights under the National Convention.

M. Hugues, in his volumes lately published on the *Life and Labours of Antoine Court*,* has brought much additional information to bear on the career of a man who has hitherto been somewhat vaguely connected with the Protestant

* *Antoine Court: Histoire de la Restauration du Protestantisme en France au XVIII^e Siècle, d'après des documents inédits.* Par Edmond Hugues. Paris, 1872.

Restoration. M. Hugues had an opportunity, as he tells us, of studying at leisure the vast collection of inedited papers left at Geneva by those who were the principal agents in this Restoration, by Antoine Court in particular, and he declares himself to have been fascinated by the unknown and picturesque world into which he found himself transported, and with its heroes, peasants and mechanics mostly, whose courage and faith worked so notable an issue. The history, as he says, is that of one long battle. "Two adversaries stand face to face: the Protestants on one side; the clergy and the Court on the other." For the views and tactics of the party opposed to Protestantism, M. Hugues consulted other archives; those of the Intendance of Languedoc, and those preserved in the National Library of Paris.

Antoine Court was born in 1696, at Villeneuve de Berg, a small township in the Vivarais. His parents were zealous Calvinists. His father died when he was four years old, and left him to the care of his mother, a woman of vigorous character. He was brought up in a horror of Romanism, a horror which the tales of daily persecution around him only served to enhance. His imagination was fed on some Protestant books of religion which came in his way; and one night he followed his mother by stealth when she absented herself from the house to join one of the Assemblies of the Desert. Thenceforth he became a constant attendant at these assemblies, and was so noted for his piety and zeal that he was allowed to officiate as a reader, and was popularly credited with some of the gifts of "inspiration." At this time Antoine had no mistrust of the enthusiasts who led the popular worship, and he invited some of the prophetesses to descend the mountains to Villeneuve, where he succeeded in giving form and organization to the little church of this his native locality. When he was seventeen years old he made a preaching tour through the Vivarais; and on his return announced to his mother his resolution to devote himself to the office of evangelization. Shortly afterwards he visited

Lower Languedoc and Dauphiné for the purpose of ascertaining exactly the state of the Reformed religion in those parts. His activity and talent soon made him a leading man amongst his co-religionists. Very soon a sensible revival was taking place among their disheartened ranks under his auspices. It has often happened with leaders of opinion to have had their views and powers matured by unsought periods of seclusion. After celebrating Easter with some other Calvinist preachers at Nismes, Court was forced by an attack of illness to desist from his labours for a time, and take the mineral waters of Euzet. When there, he meditated much on the problem, how effectually to raise again the overturned Church of the Reformation in France. He had witnessed the survival of faith among the people; he had heard the incoherent ravings of the "Inspired;" he had worked with brave and honest men, men of more sober type, preachers like himself. But all these agencies were desultory; under the severe repression of Government they might be trodden out at last like sparks under the heel. The "newly converted" were growing slavishly compliant; the enthusiasts, Court's good sense told him, were not creditable teachers of a Christian confession. To preserve the true faith should the believers emigrate? or should they take arms? The first course seemed hopeless enough for the classes who were now involved in the difficulty. To the second, the suppression of the Camisard revolt had given a sufficient answer. It would have been a "remedy" simply destructive. There remained another course: it had been suggested during the troubles preluding the Revocation, by Claude Brousson, a minister, who was afterwards broken on the wheel. He recommended to the faithful a simple persistence in the observance of their interdicted religious rites: no emigration, no civil war, but obstinate persistence. Wherever the decree of Government interdicted the Reformed worship, there let the Reformed assemble to worship: without arms. In every assembly there might no doubt be victims; the soldiers would come and

eize some for imprisonment, banishment, or hanging, but there would be a limit to this; the executioners themselves would tire of their work; Louis XIV. would shrink at last from decimating his subjects. This advice had not been followed out at the time Brousson gave it. There had been abject submission; and there had been the Camisard revolt. Court was resolved to give the middle course a trial. In a memorial which he subsequently drew up, he thus described his plan of action:

Four methods (with the blessing of the Lord, which I ceaselessly implored) presented themselves to my mind. The first was to convoke the people, and instruct them in the religious assemblies; the second, to combat fanaticism, which had spread on all sides like a conflagration, and to bring back to healthier ideas those who had had the weakness or misfortune to be infected by them; the third, to re-establish discipline, the use of consistories, of elders, of colloquies and synods; the fourth, to form, as far as was in my power, young preachers, to summon ministers from foreign countries, and should they fail in a vocation for martyrdom, and so not be disposed to respond to my pressing invitations, then to solicit supplies of money from the Protestant Powers to aid the studies and maintenance of young pupils in whom courage and good will might be found to devote themselves to the welfare and service of their brethren.

The programme of Antoine Court, as M. Hugues puts it, may be summed up in two words: Revival and Order. The Synod of August 1715, held in a quarry near Nismes, was the foundation stone of the Protestant Church restoration. There were present at it three or four laymen, and a scarcely larger number of preachers. A few general regulations were laid down, and advice given about the appointment of elders, the collection of funds, and other matters; but the most startling feature was the emphatic condemnation, in a speech by Court himself, of the fanatic preachers, the so-called "Inspired," with their pretended revelations. It was a bold thing to set in opposition to him at once the whole fanatical element, which had hitherto been the mainspring of the Survival: to part company with this recent phase of Protestantism, and trust entirely to the resuscitation of the simple Calvinist tradition. Court ventured it, and succeeded; but it involved him in a perilous tussle from within at a time when it might seem that he required all the strength of the anti-Catholic party to enable him to

make head against Government oppression.

In this Synod of 1715 it was laid down: 1. That, in consonance with St. Paul's directions, no woman should be allowed to preach. 2. That the Holy Scriptures should be received as the sole rule of faith. This last rule was significant. Owing to the proscription of the Bible by the authorities, the unlettered enthusiasts had had opportunity to play off their wild fancies as God's messages, and by degrees they had come to set aside and condemn altogether the authority of Scripture. What was an Evangelist or an Apostle to one whose enlightenment came direct from the Holy Spirit? Huc and Vesson, two of the pastors who signed the decrees of the Synod, presently turned away and became the leaders of those very "Inspired" whom they had promised to oppose. Huc rallied the fanatics around him in the Cevennes. Vesson joined a crazy sect who called themselves *Multiplants*, and were wont to meet in the apartments of one Mademoiselle Verchand at Montpellier. They designated their place of *rendezvous* the Temple of Solomon, and professed themselves the children of a New Creation, baptised into the Holy Ghost by special rites. The extravagances of these preachers and their followers called down the action of the authorities. Vesson and subsequently Huc expiated their vagaries on the scaffold. Mademoiselle Verchand — *La Glanitino*, according to her new baptismal name — was consigned to imprisonment. With these ebullitions, the delusions of the *Inspirés* passed from notice. Thenceforward no rival theory contested the representation of the Protestant cause in France with the theory of Order, upheld by Court and his colleagues.

Among the coadjutors of Antoine Court in the work he so successfully carried on, two stand out as prominent by their personal character and the importance of their agency — Pierre Corteiz and M. Duplan. Corteiz was a preacher of older standing than Court. When quite a youth he strove against the inflammatory prophets of the Camisard revolt, took refuge in Switzerland for a while, and was preaching again in the Cevennes when Court began his operations. He was a brave, fervent, persevering man; with a clear head and unselfish spirit, willing to take the second place, and give to the younger man, who was his leader, the most valuable services.

His narratives and letters are some of the most characteristic documents bearing on the early history of the Revival.

Duplan was a gentleman of Alais, in Languedoc, pious, well informed, disposed somewhat to mysticism, and leaning to belief in the pretensions of the "Inspired," which sometimes embarrassed his relations with Court. He had organized a Protestant Church in his native town before Court began his work, and his Christian zeal and charity had given him a name and influence among the "faithful." His wealth and position helped to make him valuable to his cause; and when Court came in contact with him in 1715, he showed due deference to Duplan, and confided in his experience. But Duplan himself soon came under the influence of Court's superior mind. When the "Inspired" by their self-willed proceedings became a thorn in the side to Court, Duplan's mild spirit was troubled. He abjured the "proud, schismatical, heretic, rebellious" spirits of the renegade preachers Huc and Vessod, but he believed in supernatural communications. "Our sentiments," wrote Court to him, "or this question have always been at the antipodes of each other; your experience convincing you that there are 'inspired' persons, and mine that there are none."

Another important personage in the early history of the Restoration, though less closely connected with Court than Corteiz and Duplan, was Jacques Roger, the Apostle of Dauphiné. Roger began his work independently. An exile in Würtemberg after the Revocation, he there meditated plans which on his return after the death of Louis XIV. he sought to put in execution. He met Court at Nismes soon after the Synod of August 1715, and a conference between the two men resulted in a perfect accordance of views, and a resolution each to work in his own sphere with the advantage of a mutual understanding. The Churches of Dauphiné and Languedoc became at an early period very closely united.

To do all things according to order and rule was the grand principle laid down. And in November 1718 Court caused himself to be regularly consecrated to the ministry in Cevennes, as Corteiz had been shortly before at Zurich.

The Protestants — true Frenchmen throughout this history in the sanguine spirit with which they hoped against hope, and exulted in every gleam of sun-

shine, unmindful of to-morrow's clouds — augured bright prospects from the advent to power of the Regent Orleans on the death of Louis XIV. But they were doomed to disappointment. Whatever the personal preventions of the worldly and facile ruler may have been, he dared not sanction any relaxation of discipline with the pressure of the clergy upon him. Accordingly, soon after his accession to power, he announced his intention to uphold former edicts. Assemblies were scattered by the troops of the Government, men and women of the congregations were carried off, those to the galleys, these to imprisonment in the Tour de Constance at Nesle; and here and there a preacher was caught and hanged. Still, other motives of caution or policy prevailed ever and anon; and the period of the Regency was not, as compared with some later periods, a very troublous time for the Protestants. Government, being hampered by hostile relations with Spain, shrank from exasperating a population which it had hardly the means of repressing with troops wanted elsewhere. But when the relations with Spain were smoothed down, and the Regent was dead, the old violence broke out in real earnest. The famous Declaration of 1724 renewed, in sterner terms than had yet been employed, the persecuting ordinances. Its substance was as follows: All preachers to be delivered up and put to death; all children as yet unbaptised by the priest to have the rite administered to them at his hands within twenty-four hours; no children to be sent out of the kingdom; children to be taught in the Catholic schools up to the age of fourteen; priests to be present at the beds of the dying; marriages to be performed before the priest; and heavy fines, banishment, the galleys, or confiscation of goods to be the penalties of disobedience. At first the religionists refused to believe that new measures were being taken against them. When they found that the Declaration had actually been registered in the local parliaments, sullen threats of insurrection were uttered. Court was dismayed. He deprecated any departure from his scheme of peaceable disobedience, and went through Languedoc combating all designs of insurrection. A few months after the Declaration had been published, Corteiz was able to report, "Every place through which I have passed is tranquil, zeal is great, assemblies are numerous." But the labourers in the harvest were few, and

it was difficult to recruit their ranks, for it was against them especially that the rigours of the new edict were levelled. Then it was that Court and Duplan decided on soliciting help in money from the Protestant Governments of Europe and the education therewith of young men in some foreign academy, who should be trained purposely for the work. Duplan was appointed to make personal application for this aid as "deputy" from the Reformed Churches of France. He began with Switzerland, which he traversed in 1725, exciting no small sensation by the narrative which he gave of the efforts and sufferings of his Protestant compatriots. The pecuniary results of his tour furnished the expenses of a *proposant* or candidate for the ministry, who was forthwith sent for instruction to Lausanne, a place chosen instead of Geneva, because the latter town was too much under the surveillance of France to make it a safe resort for the purpose. By 1730 six *proposants* were collected at Lausanne. They arrived too unfurnished with even elementary knowledge to be placed at the already existing Academy of the town; and a system of more private instruction was provided for them which became the germ of the subsequent Seminary for French preachers.

Court met the severe measures of the Government by drawing tighter the bands of discipline and organization among the brethren in the province of Languedoc. The "Council Extraordinary" was appointed, being a committee of a few men distinguished for their talent and energy in the Colloquies, who were empowered to act in the intervals of the Synods. Prudence in the holding of assemblies was enjoined; but they were to be held, as though no prohibition were in force. In this matter Court appealed to the example of the early Christians, who, though loyal subjects of the Emperor, and in other matters showing due deference to the powers that were, made a cardinal principle never to neglect the "assembling of themselves together." That in spite of all difficulties the "Restoration" was taking root, was evidenced this very year, when at a Synod held in the "Desert" in the month of October, some unknown faces appeared, which turned out to be those of deputies from Lower Guenne, Rouergue and Poitou, who presented entreaties from their several provinces that Languedoc would send them *proposants* and pastors. The request was complied with as far as the scanty re-

sources of the church would allow. When the Dutch minister at this time desired to have an enumeration of the Protestants of Dauphiné and Languedoc, it was ascertained that there had been no sensible diminution since the eve of the Revocation. The numbers returned were 200,000, exclusive of those timid members who, calling themselves Protestants, still went to mass. There were 120 Churches, at the head of these a National Synod, under which three local Synods were to be convened each year, six "colloquies" for the consideration of current affairs, and the "Council Extraordinary" for grave or sudden emergencies. For the evangelization of Languedoc there were at this time two pastors, Corteiz and Court and ten candidates or *proposants*; for the Vivarais, one pastor and five *proposants*; for Dauphiné, one pastor, the intrepid Roger, and three *proposants*. Three schools had been set up for the teaching of psalm singing. This state of things was a true corroboration of the plaint with which the Abbé Robert had addressed Cardinal Fleury at the outset of his ministry.

The disuse of their religion during forty years (he said, advising more moderate means of coercion than those which were subsequently employed) has by no means estranged them from it. Fathers and mothers impress it on the hearts of their children, and have no trouble in obliterating the marks which it is sought to give them in their education. Many, even of those who have been docile to God, and have tasted of the celestial gift, have quitted the faith once received, and given an example very pernicious to others whom it has been endeavoured to bring back to the Church's bosom; indeed, they have even drawn Catholics into error. They are no longer intimidated by the orders which emanate from the royal authority. They look on these as claps of thunder, which vanish with their noise; and, not being frightened, only grow more obstinate. So it is that there are really not fewer Calvinists in France than before the general conversion.

The country of Lower Languedoc is flat, and through rich olive groves and vineyards the straight dusty roads stretch like so many white ribbons from village to village. Ascending towards the Cevennes, or Higher Languedoc, the traveller sees a change in the features of nature. The olive groves and vineyards disappear; fields of rye and stunted mulberry trees succeed them; chestnuts, centuries old, twist among the declivities of the hills; torrents foam in deep water-courses; signs of habitation are few;

pathways become steep and rugged; over all hovers a sky of intense blue. There, among the abrupt and perilous rocks, the Protestant pastors of the Revival worked their way. The peasant will still point out the now disused roads by which they journeyed. Roughly clothed, with staff in hand, they would descend on market days to some town or hamlet in the plains to sow or foster the seed of the faith they cherished. On horseback rarely; but now and then some rustic disciple would lend this means of conveyance to aid the weakness of an overtasked minister. Once, when Antoine Court had been prostrated by an attack of fever, he got two men to carry him over the rough places of his circuit. Often the ministers would enter the homesteads of the believers in disguise as simple countrymen or wandering traders: detection was everywhere possible, the fidelity of partisans by no means to be always counted on.

In 1728 Court made a two months' circuit in Lower Languedoc and the Cévennes, in the course of which he visited thirty-one churches, held numerous assemblies, and traversed nearly a hundred leagues. There is some interest in comparing his journal of a preaching tour with one of Wesley's, a Reviver and Organizer like himself. Court's religious details are calm and colourless; his thoughts are occupied with practical results and with the difficulties he had to encounter from without. For individual "experiences" such as Wesley exulted in relating, he had no apparent interest or observation. The following extract may serve as a specimen of his work and the spirit in which he performed it:

I resumed my way into the country on Thursday, May 20. On my road I learnt that M. Bétrine was convoking an assembly the same evening. I attended it. From thence I set out for S. Hippolyte de Caton, where on Friday, the 21st, I assembled the churches of the place and of the environs. . . . On Sunday, the 23rd, I convoked the churches of Vendras and Lussan; on Monday, 24th, those of S. Laurent and S. Quentin; Wednesday, 26th, those of Uzès and Montaren; Thursday, 27th, those of Garrigues and Poissac. Nothing particular occurred in these assemblies; only one could see that, as on other occasions, several persons who had never before appeared at our religious assemblies were among the congregations. All was peaceful.

Having gone to Nismes on private business, I left it on Monday the last day of May, and assembled, the same evening, the churches of that town, of La Calmette, and of S. Geniès. Before leaving the town I was informed that

the assembly had been betrayed. I set out forthwith. . . . At the gate of La Bouquerie I saw a troop of soldiers, and a little farther on a troop of officers, who fixed their eyes for a moment on a horseman who was accompanying me. I could not but fear from the appearance of these two troops that the accusation had really been lodged against me. But not the less I pursued my road, persuaded that the assembly's place of meeting was a little too far from the town to make it likely it should be meddled with, and that if there was any danger it would be in returning from it, when means might be taken somehow to baffle the soldiers. We encountered, however, another obstacle. It was a murky, dark night, accompanied by rain; owing to which many wandered all through the night without finding their way to the assembly. I found one of these wandering companies on my way and served it as guide. At last the storm ceased, and we were able to finish our religious exercises in tolerable quiet. But it came on again when we had to return. Happy, however, the assembly which has only to defend itself against the rain! The soldiers made no sally upon us. On Tuesday, June 1, I convoked the churches of Lédignan, Boucoiran, Lascours, and Cruviès. M. Claris, who was to accompany me to the Higher Cévennes and the mountains, joined me there. When the assembly broke up he and I set out and made our way to the neighbourhood of Brenoux, where, on Thursday, June 3, we assembled that and also one of the contiguous churches. Some persons of your town wished to be of the party; but a very heavy rain, which surprised us on the road, made all those decamp who had gone early to the place. The few faithful who were with me did not lose courage. In spite of the rain we arrived at the spot specified. Before reaching it we fell in with a troop of people who were returning to their homes, and who told us that all the congregation had deserted. We turned the first back with us, however, and by raising our voices in psalm singing, recalled the less distant of the other wanderers. The preaching took place, and the Holy Supper was celebrated, just as if the weather had been fine, or at all events less unfavourable. On Saturday morning, June 5, I assembled the churches of Chamborigaud and C—. This last church, which distinguishes itself above many others by its zeal and courage, furnished me with occasion for exercising the principal functions of my ministry. That very day five infants were presented to me to be baptised, and as many marriages to be blessed. Next morning, Sunday, the churches of Genolhac, Frugères, and Pont de Montvert were convoked, the church of C— again assisting. The assembly was very numerous. There was seen at it what, perhaps, had never been witnessed before since the Revocation—five infants baptised in front of the assembly. This ceremony melted the hearts of all present. How many tears were shed during the sermon! The rain inconvenienced us, not only while the cere-

mony lasted, but also afterwards. But when the service was finished and the rain ceased, some retired, and others partook of refreshments on the spot. Many circles of people might be seen seated on the grass, and partaking with simplicity of a sober and frugal repast, consisting of provisions which each had brought with him; at the end of which they raised a sacred canticle. This is the usual practice at assemblies in this country. Before quitting the place I blessed five marriages.

Cruel as were the penalties of imprisonment and the galleys, decreed for those who frequented the assemblies or harboured the pastors, or observed the rites of Protestantism, the number of victims to capital punishment at this time was but small. That doom was legally denounced against the pastors only. Between 1715 and 1730 not more than four of these had been executed; Arnaud and Roussel, young men of high character and promising gifts; and Huc and Vesson, the misguided *Inspirés*, of whom we have already spoken. But severe hardships, manifold and hairbreadth escapes marked the lives of the persevering heralds of Calvinism. Court in particular was set up as a mark for the pursuers. His head was valued at 10,000 livres. His fellow religionists trembled for him, and whispered to each other with bated breath of his whereabouts and his perils. At one time he hid himself in a tree; at another beneath the blankets of his couchant host. Once he fell into converse with two Capuchin friars; once with a garrison commander, saving himself from detection by his courage and presence of mind. To pass their nights under the open sky, or in thickets and caverns, was often with the wandering preachers a safer recourse than to trust to the hospitality offered them beyond the precincts of the Desert. How long Court might have escaped the vigilance of his enemies, what would have been the result of his labours, had he continued to lead this outcast and perilous life, may be doubtful. As it was, he took at this time a sudden and unlooked-for resolution, which altered the whole course of his existence, and at first not a little vexed and disappointed his brethren; but from which the Reformed Church, in the long run, reaped ample benefit. He quitted the scene of his labours and his perils, and took up his abode in the safe quarters of Switzerland. M. Hugues believes that he was chiefly led to this step by devotion to his wife and family, whom in 1729 he had been forced to establish at

Geneva, out of the way of the Persecution and its terrors. Other motives may have been found,—shall we say?—in the pressure after a time of the constant fear of capture, the weariness of passing day after day and night after night with his life in his hand, which aided the self-persuasion that he might be doing more good to the cause of the Churches by thinking, reading, writing, on their behalf from a safe vantage ground, and superintending the all-important work of training a resolute and well-informed ministry to take up the work to which he had once devoted himself.

Court was at this time thirty-three years of age. The work he had done in his fourteen years of ministerial toil in the South of France had indeed been great. He might not unfairly say that, under present conditions, no more could be done to extend and enlarge it by exertions on the spot; that systematic, concerted action from without was the best means to pursue; but he had some ill-will to surmount on the part of those who could not but look upon it as in some sense a desertion. Duplan wrote to him, after receiving a letter from Corteiz: "On one side your companions in labour call you, and the Churches wish for you; on the other a wife and children keep you back; it is for you to ask yourself which ought to be nearest to your heart." Another remonstrance was couched in these terms: "Do you believe, sir, that when God has entrusted to you this seed, it is that you should carry it where abundance already exists? Surely not. It is destined for the lands of famine. Do you seriously believe that when God shall demand of us the souls of the poor people who shall have gone to perdition, our wife or our children will be sufficient excuse for us?" In August 1730, the Churches sent him an official requisition to return, signed by all the pastors and *proposants* of the province. To all appeals Court turned a deaf ear. He wrote to Corteiz that he was happy in having nothing to reproach himself with in the determination he had taken: that his resolution to withdraw himself, for the present at all events, from the active service of the Churches, was taken with God's sanction, and in the purest intention. One scheme which he had long entertained had not a little to do with his desire for repose and leisure. Court was not a man, like Corteiz, wholly given to active impulses; fond, for its own sake, of the rough work of the Desert, content

with preaching to the ignorant. A visit he had paid to Geneva in 1720-22 for the sake of obtaining succour for the Churches had brought him acquainted with Pictet and other educated members of his communion, and had inspired him with a taste for literary effort. M. Hugues remarks that his letters from that time are much more ornate in style, and that he lays more stress on cultivation in advising others. His own ardour and lively intelligence had captivated the sages of Geneva; and it was suggested, partly by his own impulse, and partly by the exhortations of Basnage, that he should employ himself in writing a History of the Reformed Churches of France. He now resumed the historical scheme. "His plan was vast," says M. Hugues. "He wished to write the history of the dispersions and of the refugee establishments; to portray the condition of the Reformed in France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes; to retrace the life of the martyrs, and particularly of those Churches under the Cross which God had gathered to Himself in each province." His first great business was to collect documents: and for this end he wrote circulars and made requisitions in various parts of Europe. Eventually he completed two volumes of this work; not, however, reaching farther than to the year 1690. He composed also a History of the Camisards. These, with some occasional writings, formed the sum of his literary achievements; but the careful collection of letters and other memorials which he amassed after the general direction of the Churches became his care, remains a very important storehouse of facts for the period covered by his personal experience.

When Court arrived at Lausanne in 1729, the Seminary recently founded there by a few benefactors was beginning to assume an organized form. The revenues were as yet very small and the students few. Six only had been sent by France; three of these had finished their studies, three remained. Their "studies" were of the most moderate quality. Pastors were sorely wanted in France; and to furnish forth these at the shortest possible notice was the primary object. Latin and Greek were left out of the *curriculum*. A raw young man was taken through the elements of theology, posted up in current subjects of controversy, and then turned off to illuminate the seekers of the Desert. By degrees these things improved. Court himself had the greatest

value for education, and deeply regretted his own want of it. After he had been seventeen or eighteen years at Lausanne, and funds and the concourse of students had augmented, Latin and Greek were regularly taught, and a student's term of years increased from three to five. Logical and theological exercises were also instituted. The head of the Academy was Professor Polier. Court himself did not assume any recognized official post in the Academy, for which, indeed, his attainments did not qualify him; but he was the informing spirit of the institution, its effective superintendent and guide. He encouraged the pupils, gave them counsel, excited their ardour, applauded their efforts. He could tell them, from his own experience, of the life they were about to encounter, its demands, its perils. What he required of them above all things else was what was called in the quaint language of the time, *l'esprit du Désert*. Court himself thus comments on the term: "I understand by it a spirit of mortification, of sanctification, of prudence, of circumspection; a spirit of reflection, of great wisdom, and, above all, of martyrdom, which, teaching us to die every day to ourselves, to conquer, to overcome our passions with their lusts, prepares and disposes us to lose life courageously in tortures and on the gibbet, should Providence call us thereto."

"Strange school of death," says a modern writer, of this Seminary, "which, disciplining enthusiasm within the formulas of modest prose, sent on martyrs unweariedly to feed the scaffold." The young men themselves, rude countrymen of Languedoc, were looked down upon by the aristocratic population of the Pays de Vaud; their *patois*, their garb, their customs were made subjects of laughter. Their training while at the Seminary was of the hardest description; their fare the simplest. And when the hour of departure came, when "the Desert reclaimed them," they set out with a gladness of heart which it was pathetic to witness. "They rejoiced to play their new part," says M. Hugues, "true Frenchmen that they were, daring danger with a smile on their lips, but without bravado or insolence."

Lausanne continued to be for seventy years the head-quarters of instruction for the French Protestant ministry. During that time nearly 300 pastors received their education there. For a long time great mystery was kept up as to the

source from which the funds were derived for its maintenance, and which were applied by a committee sitting at Geneva. These funds came in fact mainly from the Protestant princes of Europe, and from the French refugees within their borders. And the work of raising supplies from these sources had fallen to Duplan as deputy-general of the Churches. His first begging journey through Switzerland has been mentioned. In 1731 he set out on an extended tour through other parts of Europe. This tour, which was intended to last one year, was prolonged in fact to fourteen: "It was expected," says M. Hugues, "to achieve no result; it, in fact, secured the existence of Protestantism. In Germany, Sweden, Denmark, Holland, England, the brave old gentleman of Languedoc begged his way. He established himself principally in London, where George II. and Lord Wilmington, however, proved more niggard patrons than the general public. Unfortunately his own zeal outran his discretion, and he got involved in money disputes with the *hoirie*, or authorized committee of agency at Geneva, and with Court himself, whose tact and good temper, however, ultimately smoothed away all asperities."

Fourteen years after Court had taken up his residence at Lausanne, he re-entered France; but it was for a short visit only, and on a special occasion, to heal a schism which had divided the Protestant Churches ever since his departure in 1730, and which was caused by the insubordination and ambition of a preacher named Boyer. Court tells of his cautious entry into the realm — of his care to elude the soldiers who were "out" in the regions through which he had to pass, and the priests whom here and there he threw off their guard by inviting them to drink with him. In some places he passed himself off as a purchaser of lace; in others as a ribbon merchant from Lyons. Perhaps he would not have ventured at all, but for a momentary relaxation in the repressive measures of Government in consequence of the death of Cardinal Fleury. This temporary relaxation marks an important date in the history of the Protestant Restoration. For the first time the proscribed religion now ventured on a daring exhibition of itself. The strength that had been gathering through long years of discouragement in their Desert refuges and nocturnal assemblies craved for display, and the novel sight was seen of Protestant assemblies, numerous attended, held

in open day at the gates of cities; of marriages and baptisms publicly performed; of a joyful profession of belief amounting to audacity. But for the want of temples to pray in, and of bells to summon them to prayer, the Protestants might, to the casual observer, seem at this moment as free in their position as before the Revolution.

The cause indeed had had its martyrs. Since Court had been last in France two able and devoted pastors, Pierre Durand and Dortial, had died on the gibbet: others had been sentenced and escaped. But a new generation had arisen to supply the gaps. And of this new generation the most striking figure was that of Paul Rabaut. The influence which Rabaut's force of character gained for him among the Churches made his position similar to that which Court had once held. If Court restored Protestantism in France, says M. Hugues, it was Rabaut who gave it root. He was the leader, the representative man, of the Protestant ministry; and when, ten years afterwards, the Prince de Conti, sulking in opposition to Government at Pile Adam, thought for a moment to make political capital out of sectarian interests, it was Rabaut who in a personal interview conducted the negotiation on behalf of his co-religionists.

When Court re-entered France, he found his own place in popular estimation very different from what it had been when he quitted the country. In 1729 he had been reproached with abandoning the Churches in their need; the dark hour of persecution was upon them, and he had retreated to a safe asylum in Switzerland. In 1744 he was received with enthusiastic joy and welcome. His steadfast devotion to the cause, shown by his care of the Seminary and his active correspondence and negotiations on behalf of his fellow-Protestants, had justified his title to be still considered the head of the Restoration, which had progressed in so remarkable a manner in spite of all the trials to which the severe measures of the Court had subjected it.

At this time Protestant France counted thirty-three pastors. In Normandy, where the Revival had been but of a few years' standing, there existed seventeen Churches. In Poitou, where the persecution had been in times past especially severe, there were no fewer than thirty. In this province there was a large proportion of gentry and people well-to-do among the believers. In Dauphiné and

Languedoc, as heretofore, resided the main strength of the cause. The Churches of Dauphiné were sixty in number. In the month of June a National Synod was held; the first deserving that name that had met since the old days. Twenty-one deputies and ten pastors were present. The provinces of Normandy and Poitou, besides others of the West of France, were represented. Antoine Court, though he declined the office of Moderator, conducted effectively its deliberations, which were mainly directed to the consolidation and unification of the Protestant cause. The Churches and provinces were to draw closer the ties of concerted action; and an effort was to be made, by the presentation of a petition signed by all the Reformed religionists in the kingdom, to induce Louis XV. to withdraw the persecuting edicts, and give tacit sanction to their assemblies, marriages, and baptisms, against which those edicts had been directed. When Antoine Court quitted France to return to Lausanne, the hopes and illusions of his fellow-believers were at their highest. He shared them to the uttermost, and his review of the situation shows how easily even his statesmanlike mind was deceived. "If one reflects a little," he wrote, "on the present situation of European affairs, on the war by which for some years the Continent has been afflicted, and the small hope of seeing peace re-established, on the uncertainty of future events, which are known to God alone, probable conjectures may arise of our enjoying the sort of tolerance which reigns now, longer than might have been looked for." He took care, however, to strengthen the outworks of defence; and for this end promoted the organization of committees in the principal towns of France specially charged with giving him information of current events, and transmitting his directions to the faithful. "I shall be," he said, "the centre in which all the lines of this correspondence will terminate;" and for this end he placed himself at the head of a permanent committee of action at Lausanne, which became thenceforth for the Protestant cause an effective governing body such as Synods and Councils Extraordinary had as yet failed to constitute.

"The year 1744 was a revelation," says M. Hugues. It showed the orthodox party to what unsuspected strength their victims had attained in spite of all efforts to crush them. To rouse Government

to more active measures, false rumours of disloyalty on the part of the Reformed were now spread abroad. It was said that in their Desert congregations they sang canticles against France and against the King. Louis XV. was worked upon to issue new Edicts of Terror; and the persecution of 1745 to 1752, the *Grande Persécution* as it was called, was the result.

Antoine Court, returning to Lausanne full of exultation after the National Synod of 1744, refused at first to give up his illusions. When he could no longer entertain them, he exhorted his fellow-students to stand firm, and at every price to continue their assemblies, the cessation of which would be just the triumph their enemies wished for. In urging this point, he had to oppose an opinion which had many advocates in Switzerland. To conciliate the authorities by discontinuing the practice of public worship, was maintained by certain writers to be the safest course for the future of Protestantism. Court entered into the war of pamphlets which arose on the occasion. After a momentary panic the assemblies did recommence in full vigour, though not with the daring publicity of 1744. Night surprises by the troops, abduction of children, mal-treatment of the dead, imprisonment of men and women, capture and execution of preachers—all the old measures set in again. The sectarians steadfastly abjured the use of arms, and suffered. Among the six ministers who sealed their faith with their lives at this time was Jacques Roger, the octogenarian Apostle of Dauphiné.

When the Peace of Aix-la-Chapelle was to be negotiated, Court seized the occasion to solicit the intervention of the plenipotentiaries on behalf of the French Protestants, but it was in vain. As at Utrecht, their interests were not taken into consideration by the high contracting parties who were engaged in re-settling the affairs of Europe. The additional severities of 1752, of which the abduction of their children was a salient feature, at last worked up the Protestants to thoughts of emigration. This time Court himself counselled it; and he corresponded with Duplan and with Serce, the agent of the Irish Emigration Committee, as to the best mode of carrying it out. The emigration to Ireland was indeed the only one which prospered at this time. The French Government took alarm at the commencing exodus; placed guards on the public roads, and turned

many wanderers back. Others returned of their own accord, discouraged, and hopeless of improving their condition. But the movement had the effect of causing the authorities to pause and reconsider their attitude. A treatise just published by Antoine Court, entitled the *Patriote français et impartial*, had dwelt on the miseries endured by the unhappy Protestants, and the commencing emigration was a commentary upon his statements, the force of which was not to be evaded. At this time the controversy passed into a phase of active argumentation. The King was beset with supplications and "apologies" from the religionists. Each time the royal soldiers took the field against their assemblies, fresh documents were put forth. Antoine Court published a second edition of his *Patriote* in 1753, and in 1756 a continuation of it, dealing especially with the question of civil tolerance of the sect, and the question of Protestant marriages. The argument of Court and the other Protestant apologists was as thus: "We are three millions of our religion in the kingdom. In the eye of the law we do not exist; we are treated as rebels. We demand a civil status and a *modus vivendi*. Why are we treated as enemies of the State, and outlawed? We are peaceable citizens, honest, devoted to the King; we possess talent and fortune. We are the bourgeoisie. The State has suffered much from the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes; it suffers from it still. That measure has enriched the enemies of France at the expense of France itself. Peaceful as Protestants may now be, their continued submission under persecution cannot be guaranteed." The same year, 1756, was published an important work by M. Rippert-Monclar, entitled *Mémoire théologique et politique au sujet des mariages clandestins des Protestants de France*. The author was a Catholic gentleman, member of the Parliament of Aix; and his treatise affords a very significant token of the advance that the principles of justice and liberality had made in the classes behind the clergy and the Court since the time when the last edict of Louis XIV. was promulgated. "According to the jurisprudence of this kingdom," said Monclar, "no Protestants exist in France. Nevertheless, according to facts, there are more than three millions of them. These imaginary beings fill the towns, the provinces, the country districts; and the capital city of the realm alone con-

tains more than sixty thousand." M. Hugues observes that this treatise of Monclar's, which was supposed at first to proceed from a Protestant pen, proved in effect the medium by which the "Protestant question" was placed on the "order of the day" for the eighteenth century. The practical remedy proposed by the writer was the institution of civil marriages for members of the Reformed religion in France, analogous to the practice in Holland; "the publication of banns, for instance, in a tribunal of justice, and the celebration of marriages before the magistrates." "Is it safe," he asked, "to ill treat three millions of men who are scattered through all parts of the kingdom, even to despoiling them of all they hold dearest in the world—their goods, their wives, and their children; above all, when it is conceded that these three millions are all faithful, serviceable, nay, even indispensable citizens?"

In point of fact, it was far more the pressure of the danger and social inconvenience caused by the non-recognition of their civil status, than the application to the Protestants of the abstract principles of mental freedom now working in the philosophical ranks, which determined the bent of public opinion in their favour. Men of State and men of law felt the evil, and knew how inadequate military force really was to contend with it, how dangerous it was to alienate permanently so important a section of the population; and but for the vehemence of the clergy, totally unable as yet to read the signs of the times, persecution would doubtless have ceased some decades of years before it actually did cease. As it is, it sounds like an anachronism to hear of an ordinance issued in Guyenne as late as October 15, 1760, against assemblies, baptisms, and marriages. It was the last; the standing point of the clergy had been undermined; two years later took place the judicial tragedy of the Calas family, and Voltaire's spirited intervention on behalf of the victims of the Parliament of Toulouse. The case of the Calas' turned upon a question of legal procedure primarily; but it involved the interests of clerical fanaticism in its immediate issues; and the triumph of Voltaire was the initiative victory of religious toleration.

Antoine Court died at Lausanne in 1760. He lived to see the restoration of the Protestant Church in France an irreversible fact. If the number of three

millions, at which its apologists rated its members, was an exaggerated estimate, that of four hundred thousand, suggested by Romanist statisticians, was probably at least as far removed from truth on the other side. Three years after Court's death the number of pastors amounted to sixty-two; of *proposants*, to thirty-five; of students, to fifteen. The Seminary of Lausanne was in a most flourishing condition. The days of struggle were over. But legally the ban on civil rights was still in force; and it required the continued efforts of sagacious statesmen to get it removed. Malesherbes and Rulhières took the matter pertinaciously in hand, and at last, in 1787, Louis XVI. issued an edict which recognized the existence of a Protestant community in France, and granted to its members full civil rights as connected with the marriages and baptisms performed after their own fashions. Thus was finally reversed and contradicted the decree laid down by Louis XIV. in 1715. Although it required a further turn of the political wheel to bring Protestantism to a complete level with Romanism as to State recognition, still the vital change was effected by this law of Louis XVI., passed before the meeting of the National Assembly, before the full pressure of the *Tiers Etat* had been brought to bear on the hereditary traditions of royal and clerical autocracy. A Protestant, writing under the Empire, thus describes the eagerness with which the members of the Reformed Churches availed themselves of the relief afforded by this measure:

There might be seen the Reformed hurrying in crowds to the judges to have their marriages and the births of their children registered. In many provinces the judges were obliged to go themselves to the different communes of their jurisdiction, to prevent the assembling of such great crowds, and to spare Protestant families the expense of long journeys. In many cases old men registered their marriages along with those of their children and grandchildren.

M.

From The Cornhill Magazine.

JACK AND THE BEAN-STALK.

L.

THERE is an undeniable fascination in pastoral music, in smock-frocks, in porches with green curtains of leaf and tendril to shade the glare of the summer's day.

These pretty old villages, whatever their hidden defects may be, have at least the innocent charms of confiding lattice, arched elm-boughs, and babbling streamlets. Perhaps the clear water rushes under a wooden bridge washing by the Doctor's garden wall, and past the village green (shady with its ancient elms, beneath which the children play and the elders stretch their tired limbs), and then travels on into green summery dells of clematis and willow light. In feudal countries a strong castle dominates each nestling hamlet; here the crowning glory of the place is the Squire's house upon the hill, or the church tower with its flight of birds and musical old clappers sounding at intervals and dunning and dinning the villagers to their wooden prayers, and the Squire and the Doctor to their fusty baize cushions.

At a little distance from Hayhurst (a village that answers as well to this description as any other) is Crosslane Station, where the train stops of summer evenings. When you alight upon the platform, the engine starts off again, and you find yourself in a little crowd of village folks, market carts, and baskets, and wayfarers already beginning to disperse: some follow the road that runs past pasturing slopes where the flocks are wading; others climb the stile and dip into clover fields; one little cart with a shabby white horse takes a contrary road, bleaker and less frequented. It pushes under a railway-bridge, and runs by flats and reedy marshes, and past deserted looking farms towards an open country, where willows start into line, and distant downs mark the horizon, and far-away villages stand black against the sky.

The boy with the dark eyes, who drives the cart, is my hero, young Hans Lefevre; that low house by the common is his home; and the distant village is Foxslip, of evil reputation. It had a bad name once: thieves and wicked people were supposed to live there, and to infest the moor. Many stories were told of dark doings at the dreary little inn, which still stands on the edge of the common. Until a few years ago, there was neither church nor school, parson nor schoolmaster, in Foxslip parish. The chief landowner was Farmer Lefevre, who, it was well known, had no money to give away; he had bills out, people said, and was hard pressed to meet them. He was a flighty, irreligious sort of man. He did nothing for the poor; he was absorbed in his own schemes. He scoffed openly

at the High Church revivalisms which were going on at Hayhurst under the Squire's patronage. On Sundays, when the wind blew westward, he used (so it was said) to go out shooting crows in church time, knowing that the Squire could hear the report of his gun as he sat in his pew, and Sir George Gorges swore he would convict him.

Farmer Lefevre was almost always in hot water with one person and another; with the Bishop, whom he accused of every crime of which a bishop is capable; with the Squire, with whom he had a standing dispute about the lease of his best fields. His father had bought them from the Squire's father years before, at a time when old Sir George was in urgent need of money. I say bought, but the old Squire was too proud to convey the land to a stranger absolutely. He had granted a lease for a term of years, and somehow or other the lease had been lost; but the Farmer declared that the Squire could produce it if he had chosen to do so. It was certain that the first Sir George had received a good sum as if for the purchase of the land, and that neither he nor his son had ever asked for any rent since the bargain was made: except indeed the almost nominal sum which the farmer paid year by year. Lefevre had also quarrelled with his wife's family. Mrs. Lefevre had been a Miss Hans, and made an unfortunate match, her relations said — so did not she — for if ever two people were happy together, Farmer Lefevre and his wife were happy and tenderly united. The Farmer, although somewhat abrupt in speech and manner had the ways of a gentleman. He was a grandlooking man; his grandfather had come over from Normandy, and from him he had inherited the dark eyes and pale high-cut aristocratic features, that might have belonged to Squire Gorges himself with his many quarterings and co-heiress grandmothers and great-aunts. Young Gorges, the Squire's son, with his fat, blonde, Saxon face, looked far more like a farmer's son than did Hans Lefevre, our hero, the only child of this rebellious and unpopular yeoman. Every one had a stone to throw at Farmer Lefevre. It is true he paid higher wages than the neighbouring employers; but he was a stern master, and expected a cruel day's work. He was so strong himself, he did not know what it was to feel for others. He was absorbed in his selfish money-making schemes, people said. But in all this they judged him hardly; he was working for his wife

and his son and for the people who spoke so harshly of his life. He was draining and planting at great expense, and he had borrowed money to turn a feverish marsh into wholesome crop-land. He vowed he should pay himself back in good time, and would live to a hundred years, if only to spite Sir George; but his reckoning failed, he died at forty, quite suddenly, out in the hayfield one day. He had been helping his men to lift a great stack of straw, and he must have strained himself in some fatal way, for he put his hand to his heart and fell back in the sun. And at that minute the farm and fields, and all his hard work and hard savings, went back to the Squire on the hill-side. Sir George insisted that the lease was ended by Farmer Lefevre's death, and there was no one to dispute him. Hans was but seventeen; his mother was no match for the Squire, crushed as she was by her trouble. A great shadow of sorrow came into the little farmhouse — a passionate grief uncontrolled, sobbed away in burning tears. Emelyn Lefevre was an impulsive woman; in her own pain she forgot how cruelly she was raking the one heart that yet beat for her. She clung to Hans, who said nothing as he sat pale and shivering by her side, softly stroking her burning hands, while the poor widow poured out all her sorrow and felt relieved. But as for the boy, dearly as he loved his mother, he had loved his father still more, and this death sunk deep into his soul and into his life. He vowed to himself to win back his inheritance, but for the present he could do nothing but wait. He knew, although the others had not known, of his father's generous schemes for the people round about. He knew all that the Farmer had had at heart, and the future that he had planned when the lands were ready, and the people had learnt to earn their daily bread in honest independence, and not to receive it as a dole, crumb by crumb. But all this was over now: the cottage (it scarcely reached the dignity of a farmhouse) was their own; but the fields went back to the Squire, who offered no compensation for the money which had been sunk upon them. Sir George liked to square his accounts, and he felt that he had more than made it up with man and with his conscience when he built the pretty little Gothic church at Foxslip, out of the very first year's profit; he also erected the schools and a comfortable parsonage for his second son, who was just married, to his father's content. And

so it happened that a parson had come to Foxslip, and a pony-carriage and a parsonage, and by degrees followed a pretty school-house, with weather-cocks and an inviting porch open to the road-side, and so it came about that Lady Stella teaches in the schools daily, and helps the school-mistress with her influence and advice. And the children come regularly in the pretty little red cloaks Lady Stella has given them, and Mr. Gorges being a man of eloquence and enterprise, the devil is supposed to be exorcised from Foxslip. Some people say that being ousted in one place, he has crossed the common and taken up his abode at Hayhurst, hard by among the elms and pastures; we all know that he is said to patronize railways, and Hayhurst is nearer the station, and more convenient in many ways. Also "The Green Ladders" public house, with its lattice windows and shining oaken bar, is a far more cheerful place than the dreary little "Blue Lion" at Foxslip.

II.

SOME foolish people let their lamps go out for want of tending, but there are others who choke theirs with too much oil, or who snuff them out nervously at the very moment when the light is most wanted. Mrs. Lefevre was one of these: an incomplete woman, active, impatient, incapable, with a curious power of rising to the occasion and lifting herself out of difficulties (probably because she did not realize them fully), which might have overwhelmed a less sanguine nature. For many of these difficulties she had only herself to blame, and it must be confessed that she did this unsparingly, making matters only worse for poor Hans by her fits of remorse, each of which generally lasted until she had something new to lament over—the Squire's shabby conduct, and her relations' unkindness, and the price of coals, Hans' idleness, and his indifference about a profession, and her own incapacity. Why was she only a woman? And then she would look about through her tears to see what was to be done next. Very often it would have been far better if she had done nothing at all, but that was not in her nature. Hans could give her no advice. He knew nothing of the world, and he appeared to be in a sort of stupid dream for some time after his father's death. His mother worried at life, and found a mysterious comfort in the process, but the boy had inherited his father's reserve. He could not put words to feelings as his mother

did. She never guessed how much he suffered, nor that his nerves had received a shock which he did not recover for some years. He grew taller and leaner every day, his eyes looked dark and troubled; people and things in general seemed to jar upon him. He tried to attend to the farm, but he soon saw that it could not pay, and his interest failed day by day. His nights were disturbed, and it required all the self-control he was capable of to go on as usual. Mrs. Lefevre suspected nothing; and yet she was a loving-hearted woman; she would have done anything in the world for Hans except leave him in peace—that indeed would have been against her nature—and while blaming her let us remember that Emelyn Lefevre had as much a right to talk as Hans had to be silent. I venture to put in this plea, though I know it is not a popular opinion.

One resource young Lefevre had, although his mother did her best to interfere with it: he was very fond of reading. He would sit contentedly hour after hour, poring over his father's old books. Mrs. Lefevre was proud of his application, but still more annoyed by his supineness at his age—nearly nineteen—and doing nothing for himself. Even Mrs. Plaskett had remarked—

"Mother, how can you!" said poor Hans, turning very red, and burying his face in the book again.

Mrs. Plaskett was the grocer's retired mother, from Hayhurst, a good old creature, with a lame leg and a pony-carriage, who was glad to do anybody's errands. She came over next day with a petition from her niece, the housekeeper at the Hall. "Five pound of fresh butter, Mrs. Lefevre, if yo' can do it, and any eggs ye can spare. Lady Gorges' hens be not a-layin', and the bride is expectit to dinner. She is to stay up to Stonnymore till her own house is ready, pretty dear. Miss Gorges do seem as pleased as her brother a'most, so my niece tells me; they are nigh of a hage; the two young ladies and Miss Gorges must be dull o' times. 'Tis a dull house—Susy do feel it so, and talks o' bettering hersel'. Sir George he were allus a fault-finder. My Sammy tells me as how they calls him the Hogre at the 'Green Ladders.' 'Tis that Tom Parker, I'll be bound. Mrs. Millard should set her face against such rudeness. But ye seem busy to-day, ma'am, and put about; shall I come back again?"

"No, I am not more busy now than

usual," said Mrs. Lefevre, looking up and down, "but I cannot trust that girl of mine to do a thing, and I have been running everywhere for Hodgetts. There is something wrong in the cow-house with the calf."

"Is not that Mr. Hans under the hoak tree? why don't ye send him to see to the poor beast?" said Mrs. Plaskett. "I took a good look at him as I passed. I didn't know him, ma'am. He will be as foine a man as his father befoar long—woo-a, Jinny."

Poor Mrs. Lefevre's eyes filled up. "He will never be what his father was," she said despondingly, as she turned to go into the house.

"Eh! poor soul, I can feel for ye," said Mrs. Plaskett, shaking her black silk bonnet. "An' yet I have been doubly blessed in Tommas and Sammy too, but I fear yon lad an' his books is no great stan' by."

"My son is all I could possibly wish," said Mrs. Lefevre, with some dignity, and she went off, not without some misgivings, to look for the eggs. Mrs. Lefevre had no false shame, and disposed of her eggs and butter with perfect self-possession to the people round about. Neither she nor they ever forgot that she was a lady born, and she might have sold ten times the amount of farm-produce without loss of prestige. But, alas, the hens, uninfluenced by proud descent, forgot to lay for days together. Something seemed wrong in the hen-house, and indeed the whole farm seemed to be dwindling and vanishing away. Hodgetts, the farm-servant, was not clever with cattle. Mrs. Lefevre sometimes suspected his honesty. Betty, the girl, was also more stupid than any one could have believed who had not seen her ways. If matters did not mend they would never be able to live there, and what was to happen to them then? Mrs. Lefevre, going into her dairy, found that the eggs had been mixed, that the butter was not set, nor the milk-pans washed out, and Betty was discovered absorbed in the contemplation of a pair of new boots with heels, the dream of months past. Mrs. Plaskett had to drive off without her complement of eggs, and Mrs. Lefevre, vexed, and flushed, and worried, walked across the field to the shady oak, underneath which Jack was lying.

"Jack, where is Hodgetts—what are you about? Do go and see to the calf. How can I do everything while you lie here at your ease? It is my own fault, I

know. I have indulged you and spoilt you, and now you think of nothing but your idle pleasure—*Mill on Liberty*—what are you reading? What good will it do you? How can you spend your time on all this rubbish? I know I do not do my duty by you, but I do think you might try to be more of a comfort to—to—." Poor Mrs. Lefevre burst into tears.

Hans looked very red. "I came here to get out of Mrs. Plaskett's way. I'll go and see to the calf, mother. I'm very sorry."

"Yes, dear, do go," sobbed Mrs. Lefevre. "Oh, that your father were here; I cannot remember what he used to give the cattle. I forget everything, and perhaps it is as well that I *should* forget. Oh, what a life this is!" The poor soul leant against the tree sobbing bitterly. Life was only Emelyn Lefevre for her as she stood there in her black dress, with her widow's cap falling off. Life is only ourselves over and over again. It is you, for you, and me for me—our own perceptions meeting us again and again. Life was Hans Lefevre for the young fellow striding off on his way to the stable; a young world, troubled, rebellious, full of tender sympathy; apathetic, at times, but only at times: it was also moved by many a generous, yet silent, determination and youthful impulse. Hans possessed a certain sense of self-respect and reliance, in which his mother was wanting: her very humility of temper was against her happiness. She was a good woman, conscious of failure—not the less conscious of it because she had really tried to do her duty.

III.

THE poor little calf gave a gasp and died, and Mrs. Lefevre, bursting into fresh tears, once more began to lament her husband's death and her hard fate. "He might have saved the poor thing," she said. "Hans! the farrier says that bottle of brandy was the worst thing we could have tried, but one had to try something, and Hodgetts is so dull, and indeed I meant for the best."

"Of course you did, mother," said her son, trying to comfort her, for he saw she was in real distress. "Everybody loses a calf now and then."

"Only we can't afford to lose a calf, and other people can," sobbed poor Mrs. Lefevre; "listen to that poor cow bellowing, and Sir George's agent wanted to buy them both only last week. Why

didn't I let them go, only I could not bear to have dealings with that man? There is Patch coming for that money to-morrow, and Hodgetts' wages are due, and . . ." Hans put his arm round her and pulled her out of the stable into the little orchard, where the apple-trees and the sunset were making a glow overhead, and the flowers and green and fallen twigs, and the tangle of daisies and bright-headed buttercups, were soft under poor Emelyn's footsteps. She trod heavily, as desponding people do, while Hans, looking down into her tear-stained face, was thinking how he could help her best: she had no one else to take care of her. It only he could get work! Their farming was utter delusion, and could never be anything else. If his mother had but agreed long ago to give it all up, it would have been the better for them both, and so he tried to tell her as soon as she could listen to him. "I have calculated it all over and over again," he said. "We could make it pay still if we had the marsh fields that Sir George has robbed us of, but without the land it is impossible. Look here, mother," and he would have showed her a paper. "No, no, I can't understand—I don't want to see," cried Mrs. Lefevre, with sudden exasperation. "It is all Sir George's wickedness. It would not matter so much if only one could trust to Hodgetts and Betty; do what you like, dear, anything, anything, what do I care so long as you are happy?" and bursting into tears once more, she ran into the house and closed the door behind her. Poor Hans went and leant over the paling, feeling anything but happy, and staring at his own calculations.

Farming! he hated it. "It is a sort of slave-driving," thought the young fellow, "for those who can't afford to pay for their own conscience." If only he could get other work. They could certainly sell the live stock and pay their debts and have enough over to look about. The cottage was their own, they might dismiss the servants. There were grave suspicions against Hodgett's honesty. "His honesty!" thought Hans bitterly, "on twelve shillings a week, with ten children and a sickly wife. Suppose he does steal the eggs! Doesn't Sir George steal other people's property, with his twelve thousand a year? Will he have to answer for Hodgetts' ill-doings as well as his own? Not he. He is driving us from our home, but no one will blame him." Hans, in a fury, crumpled up the

paper in his hand and tossed it far over the hedge. It fell at the feet of a woman who was trudging out a-field with a child crying at her skirt, but she did not stoop to pick it up. Presently an old man bent double came slowly crawling along with a load of stones. He saw it gleam in the sunset, took it up, smoothed it out, turned it over and put it down again. Hans meanwhile was pacing up and down the little box walk. He had dwelt upon the wrongs of life until sometimes all the goodness and peace in the world seemed poisoned away. Tom Parker, his confidant down at the village, was more philosophical: "It ain't no good fretting," he said; "look at me! While such people as that are in power and lord it over our heads, nothing can be done. But wait a bit—see if we don't get our turn; let them go a little farther and they will over-reach themselves, see if they don't—mark my words." Tom Parker was very proud of his words, and was always calling upon Hans to mark them. Before long he hoped to have a wider audience. The other did not quite follow all his mysterious hints, and could not wait to be indignant until his feelings should be paid by the column, as Tom assured him the *Excelsior* was prepared to do. (The *Excelsior* was a forthcoming organ, a voice for Tom Parker. It was a weekly newspaper that was to put everything straight: it was only waiting for the necessary funds to commence its triumphant career under the editorship of William Butcher, the well-known agitator.) What was a newspaper more or less to Hans? He was in a rage, as many a boy and girl has been before him, because they cannot command the things of life, because other minds, schemes, injustices run their course, and they can no more stop them than they can stop a miasma or poisonous vapour from spreading when once it has risen. But Hans forgot that injustice cannot exist without justice, that there are good things and good people thinking and doing their best, as well as bad ones at their worst. Life would be sad indeed if we did not look sometimes beyond ourselves and our narrow ken. Here is one who made an effort and mourns himself a failure; here is another who unconsciously acts upon the first man's effort and counts himself successful.

As Hans leaned his disconsolate elbows upon his garden gate, he suddenly heard an unusual sound coming upon the soft gusts of the evening breeze. Was it a

charm—was it a shepherd piping his flock? It was only a woman's voice, softly chaunting a sort of wild singing-tune, that shrilled and vibrated. The pathetic voice seemed to touch him curiously. He had never in his life heard anything so strange and so sweet. Then he saw two ladies come slowly walking along by the fragrant hedge that skirted the garden. One of them had pulled some of the wild roses that grew by the corner yew-tree—the other held her hat in her hand, and had turned her face to meet the sweet gorse and clover-scented breezes from across the common. There she stood, a sun-lit nymph, dressed in that pale Japanese silk which ladies have worn of late years. She sang a few notes more, then she looked round, and stopped short. "Don't let us go on; there is that man looking over his gate, Papa dislikes him so much." She spoke in a clear and vibrating voice; it was very low, but there was almost a metallic ring in its distinctness as it reached Hans' quick ears; her companion answered, but Hans did not care to listen, and with one steady look, he walked away from the gate, rather to the ladies' consternation.

"He must have heard me—did you see how he looked? Oh, Stella, what shall I do?"

"I daresay it was chance," said the other consolingly, as she turned away. "You have dropped a paper, Lina," she continued, pointing with the rose-branch.

The lady called Lina looked down, stooped and picked the paper up and turned it over. "It is very like my writing," she said.

On one side were some calculations, wages, wear and tear so much, net balance—50% deficit. Then a scrap of poetry, copied from some book—

O end to which our currents tend, inevitable sea.

"What is it all about?" said the young lady, walking on with the paper in her hand; "here is some more poetry;" and then in that curious low voice of hers she began reading some lines that poor Hans had written down, though he had certainly never meant any one, except perhaps Tom Parker, to see them, least of all Lina Gorges, the golden lady in the sunset lane. She grew paler and paler as she read on. The verses were a tirade against her father, supposed to be spoken by the guilty Hodgetts.

They were written in the Hodgetts'

dialect, and contained a poor man's remonstrance, very simply worded, but not the less telling for that. It was a rough imitation of the work of the great master-hand of our own time. Hans had called his doggerel "A Mid-land Labourer," and the metre was that of the Northern Farmer.

Hodgetts told his own story and his troubles, and appealed to the great landlord to be content with all that he had already devoured—their daily bread, their strength, their own and their children's independence. He had reaped where he had not sown. Had he not taken the Farmer's own, and mulcted the widow and the fatherless? Would he not spare the common and the elm-trees that people said he was now about to enclose? Apollina's hands were trembling long before this; her heart was beating with passionate indignation. She could read no more. "How dare he; how dare he!" she cried, panting with sudden furious emotion. "My father take what was not his? My father take another man's property? Stella, you do not believe these cruel, slanderous lies? It is a wicked lie. It is a mistake—it is —"

Her voice suddenly failed, and Lady Stella looking up, saw that her face was crimson, and that her head was hanging, and that great tears, like slow rain-drops in a thunder-storm, were falling from her eyes. Something had changed her; all the fire was gone; all the anger. "We must send this back," she said in an altered voice, that sounded faint and toneless somehow. "Stella, will you see that young man? Will you give it to him? I cannot. Tell him to destroy it—never to let any one see those cruel words." They met Sir George at the park gate. He chucked his daughter under the chin, but she only fixed her strange grey eyes upon him without smiling, and looked steadily into his face.

"What are you thinking of, child?" said he. "Come home. Mr. Crockett is here. I brought him back to dinner."

Lina gave a little shudder, but did not answer.

IV.

How shall I describe Sir George's daughter? She herself was somehow puzzled to find herself so unlike her home, her education, her father and mother. Where had she come from? From which of the framed grandmothers had she inherited her peculiar organization?

They had not been chary of their gifts. One had given her her name: a legacy for which Apollina Gorges was by no means grateful. She called herself Lina, and made the best of it; another had bestowed upon her her beautiful golden hair. A third had bequeathed her beautiful hands and arms, and a harp and a voice of rarest and sweetest quality, although it had the peculiarity that some notes were almost entirely missing. Lina could not consequently sing all sorts of music, Scotch and Irish melodies suited her best. This beautiful creature stood somewhat above the usual height of women. She was slight and straight. Even in the days of crinoline she never gave in to the fashion. Her clothes used to fall in long folds to the ground. She had regular features: some people said they were inanimate, and reproached her with being stiff and motionless, and also with having one shoulder a little higher than the other and a head too small for her body. But say what they would, they could not deny her beauty; she herself did not care for her own good looks, but she was pleased with her beautiful hands and feet, and her serenity was not above being tempted by smart little slippers embroidered in gold, and quite unsuitable for anything but the glass cases in which the shoemaker kept them. Those who called her stiff did not know her, for she was one of those shy, but responsive people, who do not make advances; she was spirited, with a touch of melancholy: sometimes silent for hours together, sometimes suddenly excited. A word was almost enough; she would respond to a touch, as people say. It was a nervous and highly-strung nature, too impressionable for its own happiness in life. At times Miss Gorges seemed to wrap herself up in an outer case of abstraction. Very impressionable people are obliged sometimes in self-defence to oppose some sort of armour to the encroachments of too excitable feelings, and abstraction comes in the place of other qualities to give rest to exhausted nature. Lina was not perfect I must admit; she was cross sometimes, and very sensitive to the changes of weather; she was obstinate with all her sensibility, and would harp upon one idea; a storm set her quivering and almost beside herself; even a heavy fall of rain would put her nerves ajar, and untune her for several hours. She was not very active in her habits; her father would have liked her to show more taste

for country pursuits, but she rarely went beyond her pretty morning-room or her wood on the lawn outside. This walk with her sister was a very exceptional event, only Lady Stella could have brought her so far from home. Lina did not seem very happy. She was not so happy as she ought to have been, but then it was the habit of the house to be silent and constrained, especially in Sir George's presence, and Lina had lived there for twenty years, and had learnt the habit. Lady Gorges set the example. She was afraid of her husband; even for her children's sake she had never attempted to hold her own with him, and if people weakly give in time after time, deceiving themselves and their own inclinations, acting long-continued and tacit lies against their own natural impulses, nature revenges herself upon them in one way or another. Lady Gorges had shrunk from righteous battle; now she was a sad and spiritless woman; her life was one terror; her husband had some curious influence over her which seemed to paralyze the poor thing: she would start and tremble when he spoke to her suddenly. She was a pale, stout woman, with fair hair, and some remains of beauty still. Harold, her second son, resembled her. He was her favourite child; Jasper, the eldest, looked too like his father for the poor lady to feel quite at ease in his company. Lina also greatly preferred Harold to her eldest brother; she was not a little excited when she heard of his engagement. And the very first day that her brother's wife came in smiling, all through the great folding drawing-room doors, Lina was very sure that she should love her sister-in-law.

As for Lady Stella, she was a happy woman, people said; there were few who did not love her. She was brown-eyed, russet-haired, tall and slender. She was something like a Raphael lady, who is, I believe, at this very minute hanging to a nail in the National Gallery; but if one may judge by the placid looks of that serene Madonna, the Englishwoman had far more animation and interest in her expression. She seemed to be able to bear with life gently, and yet to hold firmly withal to what she had once determined — she had that *pearly* manner some women have, a tender grace, and a certain charm of gentle confidence in her destiny that won all those whom she chose to elect to her friendship. Poor Apollina Gorges often envied her in a responsive, admiring sort of way. Most

of all she envied her perhaps for the ease with which she held her own in the home where poor Lina herself had little power of so doing. Lady Stella was younger than Miss Gorges, but she came of a large and united family. Brothers and sisters, and sympathies of warm friends, often stand in the place of years of experience, and give the confidence that others only gain with age. Lady Stella knew far more of the world outside Stonemoor park gates than did poor Miss Gorges at the time when those gates opened wide to welcome the sunshiny bride to her husband's home—so for want of a better word he called it.

Lady Stella brought a good portion of brightness and sweet temper, but not much beside. Mr. Gorges was not ungrateful for this pleasant dowry. He was surprised and enchanted by the way in which she took her place, meeting his father's gloomy authority, his mother's silence and coldness, and Apollina's alternate reserves and outpourings with perfect sweetness and a courage he had never attained to. If Lady Stella's courage failed her in the first days of her stay at Stonemoor Court no one ever knew it, except perhaps Lady Mary, her confidante, an invalid sister, who had long been established as the family prescriber and sympathizer. Sir George was a bully by nature. What else could he be, with his fierce eyebrows, his thin lips, tightly drawn over a set of gleaming false teeth, and his tendency to suppressed gout? Nobody had ever said "No" to him. The first time that Lady Stella contradicted him, with one of her pretty little smiles, there was a sudden terror and silence in the room. Lady Gorges gave one scared glance at the butler, in her confusion. Sir George, who was crunching a lark, gulped the little creature, bones and all, in surprise. Lady Stella went on as if she noticed nothing, looked up at him with those clear eyes of hers. "I think Harold ought to investigate the subject," she said. "Mr. Bridges came down to my father's village, and I know my father attended the meeting." "Your father can do as he likes," shouted Sir George. "My tenants know that I am not to be trifled with."

V.

FOXSLIP Wood in summer time is a delightful place—green to the soul. The suggestions of natural things have often seemed as much a part of their charm as the actual beauties we admire.

Beyond the coppice here and there where the branches broke asunder, sweet tumults of delicate shadowy hills were flowing, gleams of light cloud, the pine-tops and the nut-leaves rustled, voices of birds, of insects, or streamlets broke the silence, tinklings from the flocks a-field, whistlings of crickets.

The wordless distraction was very grateful to Hans as he came striding along the narrow pathway, crushing the leaves and driving occasional fir-cones before him. He had been to the agent, and had sold his poor cow and the white pony, and he was disconsolately turning the money in his pocket, and thinking of the agent's disagreeable sneer as he had handed it over, of his mother's reluctance, of trouble a-head, of the squirrels up in the trees. Hans was young enough to be able to think of the squirrels as well as of his cares. We older people, I think, make a mistake in thinking care more sensible and important than it really is. We let the squirrels leap by unnoticed, while we are anxiously pondering upon the ditch, six fields off, perhaps. Poor Hans went on his way, whistling the tune he had heard Miss Gorges singing the day before. He was a slim, brown-faced young fellow, dressed in the not unbecoming dress of a country farmer. He had a short coat and leather gaiters, and a sprig of heather in his felt hat. He carried a stick in his hand. He might have been any one—leather gaiters are not distinctive, and are as useful to a Duke as to a farmer. Hans walked along as if the whole wood belonged to him, instead of a tumble-down cottage and forty pounds in silver and county notes, to keep him and his mother for all the rest of their lives. A little adventure befell him presently. As he reached the end of the wood he thought he heard his name called, and looking round he saw a lady sitting under the great Spanish walnut-tree that guards its entrance (you can see it for miles across the common). A lady or a fairy is it?—Alas! there are no real fairies in such stories as mine.

If this is a fairy, she is the size of life, and looks very like Lady Stella of the Madonna face. She is dressed in the quaint and fanciful costume that English ladies were beginning to assume some ten years ago. On her dainty head a high-crowned hat is set. The feather is fastened by a star, that glitters and shines like steel in the sunlight; her pretty white sacque is looped over a crimson satin petticoat; her pretty little feet

twinkle in buckles and high-heeled shoes; in her hand she holds a long-sticked parasol, which she is waving to attract the young man's attention. Hans comes up with wondering eyes, for he recognizes one of the ladies he saw go by the gate—not she who sang, but the other. He had been thinking of them only a minute ago, although he had not expected to meet either of them so soon again. There sat the lady on the moss, comfortably installed, leaning against the trunk of the tree.

"I wanted to speak to you," she said, in a very sweet voice. "Come here. I shall not detain you a minute:" and as Hans stood before her, looking surprised, she blushed and explained with sweet upturned eyes, "I should have called at the farm to-day, but I have to go to the duke's christening fête. I am waiting for my pony-carriage; I walked on; it is to catch me up. I have something of yours, Mr. Lefevre," and Lady Stella then put her hand in her pocket and pulled out an envelope addressed to Hans in a handwriting so like his own, that he was still more puzzled. "My sister-in-law, Miss Gorges, picked up a paper, and read it by mistake, and asked me to ask you —" (The fairy became a little embarrassed.)

"I am the rector's wife," she said starting afresh. "It gave Miss Gorges the greatest pain to think any one could so misjudge her father, whom she loves dearly, and she requests you to burn the poem, and to remember in future that Sir George has only done what he felt right and just, and that it is dangerous to draw cruel and hasty conclusions."

"Right and just!" burst out Hans. "Do you know the stories people tell, do you know the state of things all about? He turns us out of our land: do you know what sum my grandfather paid for it? Has he ever told you the terms of the bargain? Hans named a sum so large, that Lady Stella looked down.

It was most uncomfortable and distressing. The poor lady was longing to think well all round, but she began to be troubled. Her husband, to whom she had spoken, had looked very grave and said that he knew nothing about the transaction, but that he often took a different view from his father upon business questions, but Lina's passionate asseverations had reassured her, and Lady Stella had meant to scold the boy gently, listen to his story if he had one, and explain away any misconception.

"But surely," she faltered, changing her ground, "you cannot think it right for a young man as you are, to attack an old man like my father-in-law, impute every dishonourable action to him, turn him into ridicule. You have given Miss Gorges more pain than you can have any notion of, and to me also."

"As for the verses," said Hans loftily, "I never meant any one to see them; I have no other copy, and I'm sure I do not know how they came into Miss Gorges' hands. You say they are enclosed in that"—as he spoke he tore the envelope into two or three pieces—"you cannot expect me," he went on with some rising anger, "to give up my honest right to my father's and grandfather's property; and when the day comes I shall most certainly try to claim it. I am very sorry indeed," he added, turning a little pale, "to give Miss Gorges any pain; I will never do anything that is not in fair open dealing: but I and my mother are ruined. We have hardly anything in the world left of all that was ours: I must think of her as well as of myself. You cannot ask me to make no effort to regain what I sincerely believe to be our own."

Lady Stella was more and more surprised and embarrassed. Her own brother could not have spoken better, more quietly, more courteously; with all her liberality she was half angry at the young man's persistence, and yet half won by his evident sincerity and moderation of manner.

"I am sure you are mistaken, and some day you will be sorry for your unjust suspicions," she said, warmly; "but anyhow, if ever I or my husband can be of any help to you in any way—will you"—her voice softened, she put out her kind hand—"count upon us? He might advise you, and I have some little influence; you must be started in the world and get on better than you ever could now. I am sure that before long you will retrieve your—your fortune, and make your mother as proud as I hope my son will some day make me." She said it so sweetly, that Hans was completely disarmed; he could not find words to thank her.

The pony-carriage came up before he could speak. "Thank you for tearing the verses," she said, starting to her feet; "I shall tell my sister. And mind you come and see me. I shall expect you. Good-by, Mr. Lefevre," and with a kind, grave smile, the fairy drove off, brandishing her whip.

VI.

HANS walked on homewards, jingling the money in his pocket and thinking over this curious little interview. Had he pained them, those kind ladies? Should he go? He thought not; but he kept wondering what she was like at home. That sweet young lady! who would ever dream of imputing ill-meaning to her? Hans seemed to be in demand. As he passed "The Green Ladders" he saw Tom Parker, who had been away for some time, and who was now safely returned, standing with his hands in his pockets and his favourite stock in his button-hole, and a hat cocked on one side of his red shock head, looking more vulgar and important even than usual. "Here, Lefevre, I want to speak to you"—and stepping forward, he beckoned him mysteriously a little on one side. It was to tell Hans something that he had already told him more than once. There was to be a meeting of agricultural labourers held almost immediately in the bar-room of the little public. "We have secured Bridges; I am to say a few words myself," said Tom. "We asked Mr. Gorges, but I don't suppose he will care to come—too near home," said Tom with a chuckle. "You had better look in, Lefevre; what is the use of shutting your ears and eyes to what is happening? There's nothing to be done single-handed, union is everything; why, I don't despair of seeing our man in Parliament before we've done. By Jove, Lefevre, if I were you, I shouldn't lag behind. I have put your name down as a member of our Hill-ford Club. The Reds and Greens you know. We have got our organ at last. . . . I didn't tell you before, that is what I have been about."

"An organ," said Hans, bewildered.

"Yes, weekly; first-rate—the *Excelsior*. There was an indirect reply to my leading article in the first number—see *Daily Telegraph* of yesterday—mentions no names, you know, but it is easy to know who it is aimed at."

"Do you write the leaders?" Hans asked, somewhat dazzled.

"That I am not at liberty to say," said Tom. "The editor alone knows and is responsible for the authorship of each article; Butcher—don't you know him?—a very remarkable man, I can tell you. He wants to make your acquaintance; he was very much struck by a conversation I repeated, and with your views upon agriculture. He is here."

Hans blushed up; it was flattering to hear that such a man as Mr. Butcher was interested in him.

"Do you think," he asked hesitating, "that if I were to send a few notes I have put down, there would be any chance of your getting them inserted into the paper?"

"Can't say, I'm sure," said Tom, absently looking up and down the road. Five or six labourers were coming up in their smocks and Sunday coats.

"Hillo! the Parson, by Jove!" said Tom, suddenly.

"These are the people whose bitter tyranny brings things to our present state," said a small man, coming up in shiny new clothes. "I don't think your young ogre would look so sleek if he could hear some of the things that will be said to-day concerning him and the old ogre—eh, Parker?"

Hans looked up as the new comer spoke, and saw the new clergyman coming along the lane. A little procession was following; labouring-men stumping along, or hobbling or trudging, according to their various loads of years, rheumatics, cares, hard work. The new married clergyman seemed pretty free as yet from any of these overweights; and able to bear his quarter of a century with ease and hopefulness; his heart beat warmly, the sunlight was in his path, and his steps came straight and prosperous. Tom waited until Mr. Gorges caught him up, then he jostled somewhat rudely against the incumbent as he passed and sent some dust flying. Hans blushed up and made way with a little bow. He had not bargained for rudeness. He would have liked to apologize as he thought of the gentle look of Lady Stella's brown eyes.

"Is the meeting to-day?" said Mr. Gorges to Hans.

"We are all on our way there now," said Hans. "I am glad you think of coming, for it concerns us all."

Mr. Gorges looked up surprised as his wife had done. The young man answered him in a quiet voice; but it was clear and well-modulated. He spoke as if he had been one of the prosperous ten thousand.

"I had not really—a—made up my mind about going," said Mr. Gorges, looking a little embarrassed. "You see my position is difficult; I don't want to show any bias one way or another," Harold went on floundering, for he saw a look of something like scorn on the young man's dark face and a sneer in that of the

two others standing near. Hans looked away into the first battered face that went by; what chance had these poor clowns, measured against such prosperous plausible antagonists? For an instant he had thought this man was bringing his prosperity to the help of these unfortunates. He had misread the kind glances.

"I beg your pardon," Hans said; "I thought clergymen were by way of showing a bias in favour of those who want helping. I didn't know; I am only a farmer, and a very unsuccessful one;" and he walked on and caught up Tom Parker, who was laughing to himself.

"Well! here you are. There ain't anything to be got out of *them*; I could have told you so, only you wouldn't believe me. Cold-blooded sneaks, hard-hearted tyrants, we will teach them our power. Once set the *Excelsior* at 'em, you will see the old ogre down on his marrow-bones yet," and Tom cocked his straw hat and marched in through the narrow passage which led to the old sale-room at "The Green Ladders," where a deal table with a glass of water and a few rickety old benches were prepared.

"Here, set down by me," said Tom. "I am a-going to say a few words; but what's words—perhaps a dozen on 'em may 'ear them and all the good seed's throw'd away. Our organ is the real thing to give us the power, and we will use it, see if we don't. . . . Look here, Hans," he said confidentially. "I am speaking as a friend; you take your four ten-pound shares—I know you have the money by you—we give you six per cent. interest to begin with, and a fair share of all the dividends, besides paying you for any occasional leaders or lighter articles that you may wish to contribute. Your fortune's made; you are no farmer, my boy; forgive me, you never will make anything out of the land; but you have brains, and you know it, and take my advice and look to them for the crops."

Perhaps if there had only been Tom Parker and Butcher the agitator, in his shiny new clothes, to address the meeting, this story would never have been written. Hans was sorely tempted by Tom's proposal; but the thought of his mother's distress held him back, and yet, was it reasonable to refuse a good offer, made by a tried friend, because she was nervous and Tom's manners were bad? Hans looked up at his friend as he stood gasping and spluttering over his speech, grateful for a prompting word from Hans, who had quickly thrown himself into the

spirit of the thing, and felt ready to make a speech himself before Tom had finished his first sentence. When Parker finished to a tune of hobnails and shuffling, Mr. Butcher, the spirited proprietor of the *Excelsior*, took up the theme. He was an agitator by profession, and made his living by the wrongs of others; he was secretary to the Reds and Greens, a newly organized Radical club. His glib fluent sentences rolled out as a matter of course. Bitterly true they were, but some truths seem almost like falsehoods in some people's mouths, vague, meaningless. Hans knew every detail to be accurate in the main, but he listened unmoved. The unfairness and one-sidedness of it all repelled him. He did not care to throw in his venture with such a man as this, and he grasped his forty pounds tight in his pocket.

Butcher sat down, mopping up his face, and then Mr. Bridges came forward. Hans had heard of him before, and looked up with some curiosity.

This was a middle-aged strong-set man, with a powerful honest face, and a powerful honest voice. He spoke with a slight country accent that was not disagreeable; on the contrary, it seemed to give point and character to his sentences, which came slowly and thoughtfully, rolling true to their mark. It seemed to some of those who listened that it was not one man speaking; it was the voice of a whole generation of men and women who were telling the manner of their daily life, of their daily wants.

The man who was speaking had lived through it all himself, and had felt hunger and biting cold, and seen his little children suffer. He had been in and out of other cottages besides his own, where the same cruel laws of want, cold, hunger were imposed by circumstance, by custom, by thoughtless platitude. He had seen little children overtaken and put to labour unfitted to their strength; he had seen women working in the fields, and their little babies of three weeks old brought out through the bitter wind, because the father could not, toiling early and late, earn enough alone for the home, not even if he had worked all the twenty-four hours of the day. He had seen men crippled and starved into premature old age, and as he spoke more than one of those present glanced at old Frank Conderell, crawling in, doubled up, and scarce able to stand: he was not sixty years old, but he looked a hundred. Bridges went on, not very bitterly, but



clearly and to the point; it had been the custom, but there was no reason why the custom should remain. These men had been systematically underpaid, underfed, from no special unkindness and ill-will, but from the habit of the employers and the habit of resignation. But why should they resign themselves any longer to so cruel a state? Why consent to work for wages that did not represent the work nor anything nearly equivalent? Others had found out the strength of unity before this; "and I call upon all of you men," he said, "to u-nite, for the good of your children and of your self-respect and liberty, and to demand the increase of wages which most justly belongs to you. I myself have been without a loaf o' bread to set before my little ones, dismissed at a minute's notice, and with no redress. The magistrates won't convict the ma-asters, we have tried it again and again.

"Why, a pair of boots cost fourteen shillin', and a man's wages in some parts are twelve and thirteen shillin' a week. . . . I have seen people sore put to it," cried the orator, for he was an orator, "and my heart has bled for those unhappy children, doomed to toil, to lives of suffering and insufficiency. People talk of the glories of England; these are among the sorrows of our most unhappy country."

Nobody moved or spoke for an instant. Mr. Gorges had slipped in unperceived in the midst, and was sitting listening—a sense of wrong had come to some of the poor fellows present for the first time. Joe Blake got tipsy at the bar before he went home on the strength of his newly-awakened rights. Butcher beckoned Hans aside as the meeting dispersed.

"You have heard him," he said, eagerly; "will you join us? will you help these poor creatures and benefit yourself at the same time? There is the organ waiting; it only wants wind and muscle, and money is muscle. . . . Give me your hand; Parker has vouched for you. A guinea a week to begin with, and six per cent."

Bridges came up at that moment with his earnest face.

"Are you a farmer and on our side, sir?" he said; "I wish with all my heart, there were more such as you."

When the meeting was over, and Hans came home, pale and moved, in the twilight, and knocked at his mother's door, she ran to open and met him with open

arms. The time had seemed long, and her heart had been yearning for him.

"Well, dear," she said eagerly, "where have you been, and you have sold the cow—and have you got the money?"

"Better than that, mother," said Hans, with beaming happy eyes. "I think I see my way to a livelihood, to comfort you, and something I scarce care to do."

"What is it, dear?" said the widow, eagerly.

Jack put his hand into his pocket and brought out four slips of pink paper: they were four shares in the *Excelsior* newspaper. Poor Mrs. Lefevre gave a loud cry of despair.

When Hans awoke next morning, Tom Butcher was standing outside tapping at his bedroom window. "Here are the proofs of the report of the meeting," he cried: "the man sat up all night to put them into type."

VII.

Lady Stella Gorges to her sister, Lady M. Milwarden.

Foxslip Rectory, September 18th, 18—.

I have not much to tell you since I last wrote, my dearest Mary. Dear Baby is well, the carpets and curtains are spreading by degrees, the garden is getting into order, the new cook is a success. I am quite charmed with my pretty new house and Sir George's kindness and liberality. He has just been here promising to build me a dairy. I cannot think how it was I was so afraid of him when I first saw him. Harold and Lina had made me shy, I think, but although my husband laughs at me for my cheerful views of life and people, he owns that he did not do his father justice, and I do begin to hope that in future they will all understand one another better than they have done hitherto. Sir George is peculiar, but I am sure he is really warm-hearted; I have been most kind about the rectory—consulted us about everything, done everything we wished, and let us come here just when we began to feel the want of a home of our own. Of course we were very happy at Stoneymoor Court, but I must confess that it is a relief to be in one's own house, to ring one's own bell, order one's own dinner, open the window, send for baby at all hours of the day, and trot out the little ponies at five minutes' notice instead of solemnly making up one's mind to a drive the day before. Lady Gorges came yesterday with Lina. The visit went off very well; we

had five-o'clock tea in the morning room; the view was looking lovely, the purple moor, the nutwoods, the cows munching in the meadow, the distant farmhouse buried in its elms and stacks: Beancroft Farm, where that poor man used to live who wanted to go to law about his lease. Did I ever tell you about him? I cannot exactly understand the rights of the story; I am afraid Sir George is a little difficult to convince at times. The widow still keeps the farm, though the land reverted to us—to Sir George, I mean, at the farmer's death, and the lawsuit was avoided. The Rectory is built upon one of the fields, and the garden (which certainly is wonderfully productive and succeeds admirably—we have been most fortunate in our gardener) was drained out of a marsh by Lefevre himself—I felt quite grateful to him to-day when I saw Baby's ecstasies over the honeysuckles. (I assure you that children begin to observe everything at two months old.) I should like you to know a young man, the farmer's son, who interests me very much. He sometimes comes to see me. I am sure he will make a name for himself. He is very clever and very handsome; he writes in a horrid vulgar newspaper called the *Excelsior*, which has had the most extraordinary success. Harold likes it, but Sir George cannot bear the sight of it. He wrote an angry letter to the Editor, a short time ago, which all the county papers took up, and they say it nearly doubled the sale of the *Excelsior*.

Poor Lina misses Baby dreadfully, she says. Lady Gorges is not fond of children. Dearest Mary, do they wind her up on Tuesdays with the clocks? Hushsh, you say. Peggy brought Baby in to see her grandmamma, and Lady Gorges never looked at the child. No wonder poor Lina looks sad sometimes, and my heart aches for her when I think of our own mother, and all the love and warmth of our old home. It was everywhere, and lasted all day long; it tucked us up in bed, and seemed to come shining in of a morning. Dear Mary, I like to think my children will inherit some of our mother's love, though they will never have known her. You will be interested in the schools; they are beautifully arranged, with dear little children (only that I have such a horror of Baby's catching any infectious illness, I would let him go and play with them when he is older). Hannah Gourlay is a real treasure of a mistress. I have only seen her

once. She came to thank me for furnishing the room in the schoolhouse, but I told her it was your doing, not mine. It is very nice to see people who have seen you, dearest Molly. When am I going to see you? Meanwhile I shall go on writing; but I must finish for to-day, for it is post-time, and Lina is coming for me in the pony-carriage.

Your S. G.

Letters are storybooks written for one particular person, and storybooks attempt, in some measure, to represent life without its attendant restrictions of time and space. What are miles to the writer? years fly before his pen, estates are enclosed within the fold of a page. Three months had passed since Hans purchased his pink shares from Tom Butcher. To everybody's surprise, the *Excelsior*, as Lady Stella said, was a most extraordinary success. The Reds and Greens were a powerful community; and their paper, which had been on the very verge of ruin when Hans' 40*l.* came to start it again, was now a recognized power in the county, paying ten per cent. dividend. Hans had certainly, as his mother said, wasted a great deal of time over his books; it turned to some profit now that he was farming ideas and pens and ink instead of oats and beans. He was himself more surprised at his own success than anybody else.

There are some people who all their lives long have to be content with half-brewed ale, the dregs of the cup, envelopes, cheeseparings, fingers of friendship. To take the lowest place at the feast of life is not always so easily done as people imagine. There are times and hours when everybody is equal, when even the humblest nature conceives the best, and longs for it, and cannot feel quite content with a part. You may be courageous enough to accept disappointment, or generous enough not to grudge any other more fortunate, but to be content demands something tangible besides courage or generosity.

Hitherto Hans had been anything but happy. He did not like his work, or his position in life: he had grown bitter over the wrongs he saw all about, and could not mend. Now he seemed to see hope dawning; but his mother's incredulity was very distressing. She loved him, but could not believe in him. She admired in secret, but certainly her talk was not encouraging. He wanted to improve the condition of the people round

about! As if an inexperienced boy could do anything. Why had he not tried his hand upon Hodgetts? How could he write about things in which, he must confess, he had failed utterly? "If reformers would only try their hand at their own work. . . . Your dear father never neglected *his*, nor complained of his position," continued Mrs. Lefevre, with a sigh. "And I'm sure I never regretted the step I took when I became a farmer's wife, and left my own sphere" (Mrs. Lefevre's sphere had revolved in the pestle and mortar of a suburban apothecary); "but indeed, dear, I have often thought how much better it would have been for you if your father had married somebody more able to be of use, more — What is that singing, Hans?"

"It is the chapel, mother," said Hans. "This is their Thursday meeting."

Hans and his mother had been wandering along the road, in the cool of the evening, and gone on farther than they had intended. Hans was bareheaded. Mrs. Lefevre had only thrown a shawl over her head; it was early still: the meeting was held at six o'clock, and it had only just begun as Lady Stella and Miss Gorges drove by in their basket carriage, on their way home to dinner at the Rectory. Lady Stella stopped the horse for an instant to shake hands with Hans and to speak to Mrs. Lefevre. "We were to have met Sir George," she said; "have you seen him go by?"

Mrs. Lefevre said "No" so curtly that Lady Stella blushed and drove on; as for Miss Gorges, she had not spoken, but had sat quietly looking at Hans with curious pale blue sympathetic glances. Somehow they seemed to magnetize him; a vague something seemed to strike some mysterious chord as he watched her. When Lady Stella blushed, her sister-in-law turned pale, and Hans thought that in her eyes there seemed to be some odd look of understanding, of apology; it must have been fancy; it was too absurd. She seemed to be there even after the carriage had turned the corner of the lane, still looking at him.

"She looks proud enough," said Mrs. Lefevre, indifferently; "what is it they are singing?" Hans did not answer. The two had stopped for a minute to listen to the hymn which came mingling pleasantly with evening honeysuckle and clover scents. It was a cheerful sort of strain; very different from the drawling moan of the little Sunday scholars — old Caleb Ferrier, the shepherd, seemed to

be leading, and the whole congregation was joining in, nodding time and clapping books and elbows in the most inspiring manner. These people were certainly singing their own song and praying their own prayers in this little square brick box, and asking for the things they really wanted for themselves and their families, instead of for those things which other people had thought necessary for them. Other people, such as archbishops who had never worked all day long in a stubble-field; high court councillors who had never eaten their wives' hunch of bread in their hungry need.

Tom Parker in a corner by the pulpit was very prominent, with a stock in his button-hole and a hymn-book, flourishing the time; he glanced over his shoulder at the open door of the meeting-house and caught Hans' eye, but went on singing.

"An' win our glorry crowns," shouted Tom in chorus, "as we go marching on;" "And we'll march, and we'll march, an' win our glorry crowns," sang the old shepherd, and the clerk, and the minister, and Mr. Nangles, and his three daughters. The whole chapel seemed inspirited by the cheerful tune, and if living a good life only consisted, as the hymn-books tell us, in marching about in bands to music, the congregation seemed well advanced on its way to the New Jerusalem.

Mrs. Lefevre felt she ought to say something to counteract the effect of the hymn tune, but somehow it had cheered her up too as she listened, and it seemed ungrateful to complain just at that moment: still she could not resist a little sneer at Tom Parker. "Did you see him with that enormous nose-gay?" she said as she walked away. "How you can bear to spend whole evenings with him or that man Bridges at that horrid 'Green Ladders,' as you do — I am sure Sir George must think —"

"What do I care what he thinks — if he did think," cried Hans. "Bridges is a noble fellow, and if he had ten thousand a year he would do more in a week to set things right than the old ogre has done harm in all his wicked life."

"Hush!" said Mrs. Lefevre, and Hans, looking up, heard a horse's foot strike the road. It was Sir George, who gave a disagreeable sort of grin, showing all his great teeth, and rode on.

Sir George had delayed — he had a special reason for delay — but all must be settled now; and leaving Foxslip behind, he went placidly journeying along the

road. His well-equipped groom cantered behind.

It seemed an odd arrangement of fate by which all these tranquil and gentle things belonged to this fierce old man. Sloping shadows, waving coppice, soft prismatic tints and pasture land and pleasure lawn; the manor-house, rising above the elm heads, and the distant farms of which the gables were peeping through the nutwoods. The very nuts in their little wooden cases were Sir George's, and the birds' eggs in their mossy nests. Little Jeff Ferrier, panting along the road from Hayhurst, had some of the Baronet's property in his trowers' pockets as he scrambled out of the horse's way. Sir George threw him a copper and rode on—he was in an amiable mood. He had struck his grand blow, and would now prove to his tenantry that they could not hold revolutionary meetings with impunity on his estate. They incited his labourers to strike; did they? He would show them who was master, and that he was Lord of the Manor, and if he chose to cut down the trees and enclose the common for building purposes nobody could prevent him. Something else had put him into good humour with all the world, with his own daughter especially, that morning; and Jeff Ferrier owed his copper to no less an event than an interview between Sir George and Mr. Crockett, the new owner of Trembleton Court, "who had come forward in the most gentlemanly manner," said Sir George to his wife, "and really Lina could not do better."

Poor Lady Gorges! her heart failed her, for Lina had declared in secret that nothing would induce her to do so well for herself as to marry the owner of Trembleton.

A minute later the little ploughboy came up to Hans panting and dusty. "Be grandfayther in the-ar, I say? mother wa-ants him. I werr to bring 'im quick, and Mr. Parrrker tu." Jeff Ferrier was ahead of the usual village urchins and could take a message on an emergency, but it was difficult to make out what he wanted now, so excited and breathless was he. "The trees, they'se cuttun our trees," he repeated, with his little gooseberry eyes starting out of his head. "They'se broake oop grandfayther's bench where 'a sits Soonday," said Jeff, still panting. "Goa and see for ye'-sell, can't ye? Mother said some one werr to soap 'un."

Hans began to understand, and with-

out another word he walked back a few paces, and going to the chapel door, beckoned out his friend. Then Jeff was called up, and after a minute's consultation Hans and Tom Parker set off running across the fields. As the two young men hurried along in hot haste, they met Sam Plackett meandering along the fields talking to his sweetheart; at a few words from them, he left that disconsolate damsel to follow as best she could, and set off running too. Hans hurried on first with gleaming eyes, and as he reached the green he saw that his suspicions were only too real: one great noble tree lay helpless, with all its shady branches outspread and quivering still, upon the grass. The men had got their ropes round a second tree: birds were flying from the branches, widow Barnes was weeping piteously and clinging to the bailiff's arm; one or two little children were looking on scared, so were a couple of young men from the public-house.

The bailiff paid no attention to widow Barnes, but a more serious obstacle standing in the midst of this group was the Rectory pony-carriage, in which sat Lady Stella. Miss Gorges had jumped out and was standing in front of the great fallen tree.

"My father could not have intended that you should do such a thing," cried the girl in her ringing voice. "Mr. Mason, I beg you as a personal favour to tell these men to leave off."

"Yes, Mr. Mason," cried Lady Stella, "it must be a mistake."

"I am sure, ma'am, my lady," said Mr. Mason, turning distracted from one to another, "I am very sorry, I — Sir George was positive in his orders. I myself think it a pity; but —"

"A pity! it's a shame," cried Miss Gorges, "to cut down these noble old trees. I am sure no one has any right to do so," she cried, more and more excited, in a vibrating voice.

"Ain't it a shame, Miss?" sobbed widow Barnes, with many a memory in her old heart of young life and courting days, and long years passed beneath the shade.

The agent looked bewildered from Miss Gorges to Lady Stella, who still sat in the little carriage, to Hans and his companions, who were looking very resolute, and who had quietly surrounded the doomed tree and the men at work upon it.

"Here is Sir George," said Mason, much relieved and looking up the road.

Lina gave a little cry, and ran forward to meet her father. In her excitement the strings of her bonnet had come untied and were flying behind her mixed with her long golden curls. Hans never forgot her as he saw her that day. She was moved, thrilled out of her usual silence; as with clasped hands and streaming eyes she stood entreating her father to forbid the men from going on with their work of destruction.

"Nonsense, nonsense," grunted the Baronet: "why have you delayed, Mason? Miss Gorges does not understand. Get into your carriage, Lina, and drive home. It is a matter of business. You have nothing to do here."

Lina was trembling, but she still persisted in her entreaties.

"Get into your carriage and go home, I tell you," hissed the Baronet through his great yellow teeth.

Lady Stella bit her lip with indignation; Lina, paler and paler, seemed ready to faint.

"Papa, I —" The words died away on Lina's lips, her father paid no heed to what she said, for something else now came to withdraw his attention. This something was no less than a reinforcement of the villagers with sticks and pitchforks, who had suddenly at a signal from Hans surrounded the remaining trees.

"This is our property, you have no legal right whatever for what you are doing. I defy you to prove your right to our common land," shouted young Le-fevre in a loud voice. His eyes were sparkling, his nostrils were open, his head was thrown back; no young warrior ever flew to arms with a nobler and more determined aspect. They all felt instinctively that Hans was their leader; he had got the men together, by magic almost, and now he stood among them alight in his youth and in the undaunted vigour of his generous scorn.

"You miserable men," he said to the woodmen, "cutting down your own inheritance, coming here to spoil your neighbour's. What has that man ever done for you or for your children that you should consent to do this dirty job for him?"

"Go on with your work," roared Sir George.

"The trees are sold, Sir George has contracted for them, and you understand a gentleman's word," said Mr. Mason, still apologizing.

Hans gave a glance of scorn and

amusement, his men closed in, and one of the woodmen sulkily flung down his saw.

"I'll be d——d if I go on with this here job."

The other two followed his example; in vain Sir George cursed and fumed at Mason.

"Come, Lina, come," said Lady Stella of the burning cheeks, and Lina, deadly pale, turned round, and with downcast, shame-stricken looks got into the carriage again. As the two ladies drove off along the bend of the road which passed the place where the resolute young men were still keeping guard, Hans heard a low long sort of sobbing sigh that touched him profoundly.

Then, in a little more, the green was deserted, the widow's donkey came trotting back to its accustomed grazing place, the cocks and hens stalked about in their usual desultory manner, one great tree still lay on the ground, but the others were safe, and their murmuring branches seemed rustling with deep fresh life all that night, long after the moon had risen and stirred the shadows on the plain.

From The Cornhill Magazine.

TURKISH GEORGIA.

"A HANDSOME but worthless nation." And with these words Gibbon summarily dismisses the Georgians from his pages.

Poor Georgians! With all due respect for the great historian, I cannot but feel inclined to dispute the propriety of the latter epithet he bestows on them, were it even for nothing else than the correctness of the former. Beauty and goodness had once but a single name, common to both in the most copious of all languages, the expression of the noblest of all minds; and Greek philology, like Greek philosophy, however high fantastical at times, had the most often a true foundation deep in the nature of things. Is indeed fair without so often foul within? or is not the outside form rather more generally a representation, a reproduction indeed, and a consequence of the inner being? There are, I am well aware, many wise adages to imply the contrary; but we may remember that personal beauty, rare, in all truth, even among women, is yet rarer by far among men, the makers of these wise adages; and it is not foxes

alone that have called unattainable grapes sour before now.

But to leave generalizations and return to our Georgians, such as they are this day. Business, whether of the state or not, has made me more than once a looker-on among them, and given me ample opportunity for judging both how far they still deserve their hereditary reputation for physical beauty, and also how far they merit the uncomplimentary adjectives bestowed on them, not only by Gibbon—who from the very vastness of his scope may easily have been obliged to content himself occasionally with comparatively scanty or superficial information on some points—but even by other more special writers.

Large allowance should be made when we criticize races which, owing chiefly to a misfortune of geographical position, and the dangerous contiguity of more numerous and more powerful neighbours, have for many ages received and borne a foreign yoke, till its impress, for good or evil, has been fairly stamped into their shoulders. Bad luck may have more to do with the fact and its consequences than bad deserving. It is no blame to Croatia that it is ruled by Austrian administration; nor, if guarantees fail them, could Luxembourg or Belgium be held responsible were they swallowed up in the German Empire. What can a little fish do in the presence of a big one but be eaten by it, and according to Sydney Smith's wise recommendation, try not to disagree with it?

Now Georgia has for centuries past been that little fish; or, to use a comelier metaphor, an unarmed, fallen, and wounded man, over whose prostrate body Turk and Persian have, generation after generation, fought their fierce frontier strife, till Russia coming in gave the duel a Midshipman Easy, or triangular, character. Not, however, an equilateral one, but illustrative rather of the old axiom which sends the weakest to the wall; Persia, undoubtedly the feeblest of the three combatants, having to give up her hold on Georgia altogether, while Turkey, a little—but only a little—stronger, managed to retain a curtailed portion of her prey, of which, however, the lion's share naturally fell to the lion of the partitioners, namely Russia.

With that larger share, now known as Russian Georgia, I have for the moment nothing to do. It is indeed to its inhabitants that Gibbon's antithetical notice chiefly refers; but they, since the his-

torian's time, have undergone a great change, that of Russification—a process likely in many ways to render them at once less worthless and less handsome. It is rather of the smaller section I now would speak, that yet included—though for how long to come may well be questioned—within Turkish limits, and hardly at all changed by the lapse of the last century. This is "Gurjistan," or Turkish Georgia, a country rarely visited, and more rarely described; even for the Osmanlees themselves, its present masters, it is all but a "terra incognita," and to that very circumstance it chiefly owes what interest it possesses.

In a misgoverned and declining Empire like that of Turkey, where administration is only another name for fiscal exaction, and where the presence of the ruler is chiefly made known by the diminution and decay of those he rules, the thoughts and investigations of the traveller are apt to be directed to the past rather than to the present, to historical relics rather than to actual life. Palestine explorations, Assyrian excavations, Ephesus diggings, and the like, while they bring to view the splendours of former ages, discover no less the nakedness of the modern land. It is among the dwellings of the dead, not of the living, that men go in quest of monuments and bones. Indeed, of all the vast territories which by the grace of God, and the forbearance of neighbours, own the Sultan's rule, Egypt is perhaps the only one of any importance that has a present to speak of; and a *Village Life on the Nile*, or the like, can be read, if not with the same eagerness as a description of the Theban marvels, or the graceful relics of Philæ, yet with tolerable interest. But when we come to Syria, and even more to Anatolia, our view is fixed wholly on the past; and the Ottoman tent, pitched amid the ruins of a score of shattered civilizations, only attracts our eye by its incongruousness with the memories around.

Yet here again some local exceptions may be found: in spots where the Stamboulee footstep has not been deep enough impressed to stamp all life and vigour out of the land: where something still remains of national energy and type, to arouse sympathy for the present, and allow hope for the future. One of these is Turkish Georgia, or Gurjistan.

Reference to any atlas will show that the extreme north-eastern horn of the Ottoman Crescent half embraces the

Black Sea on its inner edge; while its outer curve rests partly on the newly-defined Russian frontier, partly on the great inland tract that once was Armenia.

The angle thus formed is occupied by Gurjistan—a name expressing the long-maintained nationality of its inhabitants.

It is a noble region: few more so. Lofty mountains, granite the most, intersected by deep and well-watered valleys; vast and virgin forests of oak, beech, chestnut, ash, pine, and fir, all of luxuriant, often colossal growth; great sweeps of rich pasture-land; flower-enamelled meadows, jotted with great trees, and overhung by peaks and precipices beyond the imaginings of a Salvator Rosa; while the thunder of the waterfall mixes with the ceaseless roar of the full torrent from below; the beauty of the Apennines and the grandeur of the Alps in one. Wherever the soil is cultivated—scratched, I might say—there springs up from it a half-wild abundance of crops and fruit, corn, barley, vines, orchard-growth; while the frequent traces of ancient but abandoned mines—what is not abandoned under Ottoman rule?—bear witness to the wealth of metal, copper, zinc, iron, lead, and silver, beneath the surface. Snow lies on the towering peaks of Karkhal Dag, near the sea, and of Kel Dag, close to the Russian frontier, each of them above twelve thousand feet in height, all the year round; while in the garden-like vallies of Liwaneh and Showshet, immediately below them, the apricot and the peach ripen, and the clustering vines only need a more skilful care to rival those of Burgundy or central Italy. Rice-fields and mulberry groves, where silk is reared, line the river-courses.

Such is the country through which I wandered for several summer weeks, unrestrained in the liberty of my way by the prescription of roads, for the best of all reasons, that not a single road exists here; and the tracks, even where underservedly dignified by the name of horse-paths, are all as nearly as possible like each other in roughness, steepness, narrowness, and every other unroadlike quality. Indeed, for about half our rambles we had to lead our horses by the bridle: as keeping on their backs while at such angles, and along such razor-edges as we continually had to traverse, was out of the question.

But before we lose ourselves in the mountain labyrinth, let us halt a little under those green spreading walnut trees

by the rushing waterfall among the rocks, and do introductory honour to the Muse of our time, Her of statistics, or at least of precision and detail.

Of the three districts which compose the main of Gurjistan, one, that of Liwaneh, lies along the lower valley of the Great Chorok stream, the Harpasus of Arrian; it is the only one which enjoys the honour of possessing a town, the town of Artween, which, with its eleven hundred houses, besides baths and mosques, but no schools, clings to the rapid hill-side slope leading down to the river, exactly at the point where it first becomes navigable for boats, some fifty miles distant from the sea. The other two districts, Showshet and Ajarah, lie further East, the former inland, the latter approaching the coast. Two smaller tracts, Keskeem by name and Chorok-Soo, belonging the one to Liwaneh, the other to Ajarah, complete Gurjistan proper; which numbers in all about four hundred villages, and two hundred thousand inhabitants, male and female. Whosoever desireth more information of the kind, is it not written in the Book, the Blue Book of Consular Reports? Seek and it will be found.

"A race of men"—I quote once more from Gibbon—"whom nature has cast in her most perfect mould, is degraded by poverty, ignorance, and vice." For the inhabitants of Turkish Georgia this is only too true; yet, situated as they are, it could hardly be otherwise.

Poor, ignorant, vicious, handsome Georgians! I am fond of them, and cannot help being so; good-looking, that they certainly are, men, women, and children, in no ordinary degree; a fair, bright-complexioned, light-haired, long-haired race, tall, lithe, and with all the mountaineer grace of bearing; cheerful, too, conversible, sociable, though wild, careless, out-of-elbows, lawless, scapegrace; yet such as have evidently in them the making of much better things, had they only a chance. But of all the hundred and one nationalities under the Ottoman incubus which has a chance? The best off are those who are the most left to themselves; and who in consequence, if they do not grow richer, do not at any rate grow much poorer: if they do not get better, do not either get considerably worse.

Their dress is very characteristic. It is a mountain dress, admirably adapted to the country they live in; trousers loose above, but tight-fitting as garters

below the knee to the ankle; and light open jackets, fancifully embroidered and braided; the ordinary colour vandyke brown; the stuff itself home-made, warm, and strong. Their linen, too, is home-made; every cottage has a small patch of flax belonging to it. Turbans are unknown: the head is covered by a cloth hood, of the same material as the jacket, with two long pendant strips on either side, which at need are folded across the chest and round the neck, forming an excellent "comforter" in cold weather; in warm, they are wrapped round the hood itself, so as to give additional protection against the heat of the sun. Hood and strips are decorated with simple braid, or silver, or gold, as the age, or circumstances, or vanity of the wearer may direct. Round his waist every Georgian wears a leather belt, often curiously worked with brass or silver, from which hang a gourd-shaped powder-flask, silver mounted, a little brass bottle, containing oil for the gun-lock, a complicated cord or thong, said to be for binding possible captives, but as useful in many other ways as a schoolboy's ball of twine; and in the girdle are invariably stuck a long double-edged knife or dagger, and one or two huge silver-adorned pistols. In the hand or over the shoulder is a single-barrelled gun, long, bright, brass-mounted, with a flint lock; this the Georgian never fails to carry with him, and to make good use of, for he is an excellent shot, and hares, wild goats, and other game, are plenty in the mountains.

Very picturesque, too, and curious are the Georgian dwellings. Nominally classed in villages, but in fact standing each house alone, the existence of a hamlet is only made known by stray patches of cultivation, two or three springs and running channels of crystal-clear water, and, somewhere or other within a circuit of a few miles, a group of walnut trees, and under its shelter a large square wooden building, the sides resembling an exaggerated bird-cage, the eaves and porticoes outpassing those of any Chinese temple; the whole being a mosque, but reduced to its most simple expression, without minaret, apse, or adjunct, except a few wooden benches or trunks of trees laid horizontally near the entrance, the ordinary meeting-place of council or gossip. The houses, too, are like the mosque in their exuberance of porches, open galleries, and over-hanging roof-eaves, a style of architecture suggested by the only building material now used,

wood, from the foundation posts in the ground, to the wooden shingles that do duty for tiles on the roof.

This was not, however, always the case; for the whole district is jotted over high and low with ruins of stone-built churches and castles, belonging to former times. Not Byzantine in any respect; the Georgian architecture, whether ecclesiastical or secular, comes much nearer to the later Roman, as we see it in Southern Europe, and looks as if it had been first borrowed directly from those models, and afterwards developed itself with certain peculiarities of its own.

Thus, for instance, one of the Georgian castles, that which guards the passage of the Chorok river at a place called Gonieh, is absolutely Roman in outline; so much so that the best idea I can give of it, is by comparing it with the camp-ruins now called Borough Castle, in Suffolk. Like it, the long lines of wall, some twenty feet in height, and from five to six in thickness, enclose an open square of about a hundred yards each way; only the materials, instead of being alternate layers of rough stone and brick, are here stone only, but united by a cement little or not at all inferior to that of Roman use. The towers, too, squat and almost solid, four on each side, besides those, somewhat larger and higher, at the angles, are square instead of round, and in height slightly overtop the wall. Four gates; and over the principal one, to the west, a Georgian inscription, which my ignorance disqualified me from deciphering; though for this the villagers consoled me by saying that it was not the original one, which had been defaced by Sultan Seleem, when he conquered country and castle near four centuries ago, but of recent date, and put there by some private hand not long since. But a more palpable imitation of a Roman fortified camp than this stronghold I never saw.

Much more mediæval in appearance, with its broken battlements, narrow loopholes, bartizans, and fragments of high towers, is the important fortress of Chikanzir, to give it the Georgian name which has superseded the more euphonious Iris of Arrian's time, where it frowns from its lofty storm-beaten cliff, on the same line of defence further east. Tradition ascribes it, as it does the majority of the many castles in the neighbourhood, to Queen Tamar, who ruled over Georgia in the twelfth century, and who here, they say, took refuge when flying from the Byzantine arms, and made a brave

and successful stand. History does not, I believe, confirm these details; but, which is much more to the point in popular estimation, the foot-print of Queen Tamar herself does. In fact, at the base of the cliff, and occasionally washed by the sea when a strong westerly gale drives up its heaped waters on the coast, I was shewn, on a huge granite slab, deep imbedded in the sand, the impress, clearly defined, of a naked human foot, long and delicate like that of a woman, but deeply indented, and of darker colour than the rest of the stone. A curious freak of nature. Others will have it that it is the miraculous memorial of a Greek or a Georgian priest, fleeing from Mahometan persecution; while the more zealous Mahometans, not to be so outdone, claim it a relic of some nameless saint of their creed, who by the efficacy of his preachings converted the neighbourhood to Islam. So all unite in venerating it; and I myself, who have seen the impress of the fancied footsteps on the Mount of Ascension, on the Sakhrak of the Mosque-transformed Temple, on the avement of the Roman "Domine quo vadis" near the gate of San Sebastiano, and others, can bear witness that this one of Queen Tamar, though by no means the most celebrated, is by far the best of its kind among them all, and certainly not the least authentic.

Between those two styles, the earlier or Roman, and the latter or mediæval Georgian, are several, so to speak, transition castles, not unlike in construction those called Lombard in Northern Italy. Here the principal feature is a huge square, or slightly oblong tower, fifty or sixty feet in height; its walls are massive, and pierced with small square holes, and a window or two; the summit crowned with large battlements. The materials are stone, partly hewn and partly rough, with cement of a quality inferior to that used in the earlier buildings. Wherever the tower is not rendered inaccessible by the steepness of the rock on which it is built, out-works, divided into courts inner and outer, are added; the walls are low and thick. The castle entrance is always near an angle, and double, leading by a winding passage into the courts, but the keep itself has often no door; the only admittance being a window from which a ladder, ten or more feet in length could be let down or drawn up at will. Indeed, in one of the finest specimens of this kind, which I visited among the wild mountains of Hamsheen, where the Geor-

gian frontier touches that of the kindred, but hostile, Mingrelian province of Lazistan, I found that the entire castle, keep, out-works and all, could only be approached by a break-neck scramble over a couple of fir-trunks, cast by the peasants across a chasm in the rock where once a drawbridge, now long since vanished, had probably been. The donjon tower was in this instance about seventy feet high, and eighteen square; its position on a giant pinnacle of rock, piercing from among the dense woods around, while the torrent river foamed and roared hundreds of feet below, was grand beyond description. But no tradition attaches to the castle, nor could I discover any commemorative inscription; its date is attested by the style alone.

Smaller castles, too, of what may loosely be called the feudal type, abound in Gurjistan, built at different periods by the semi-independent Emeers, or Princes, as it is the fashion to translate a title much better rendered by "baron," and some of comparatively recent date. These half dwelling-places, half fortresses, which in general appearance bear a certain family resemblance to the ruined strongholds of the Rhine, are to be found everywhere perched each on its abrupt or isolated height at the entrance of some valley, or overhanging a narrow defile; their form is picturesquely irregular; their battlemented walls, turret and tower, more remarkable for massiveness of construction than for architectural or engineering skill. Strange apocryphal legends are attached to most, and "Kiz-kaleh," or the "Maiden's Tower," is a common appellation. One such, which attracted my notice by the unusually elegant proportions of its lofty keep, had long, I was told, been occupied by an Amazonian princess — women figure frequently in Georgian stories — who finding herself hard pressed by savage besiegers, and having lost the greater part of her garrison, stipulated for the lives of the remainder; and then ordering the gates of the castle to be flung open, cast herself headlong from the battlements into the abyss below, rather than incur the dangers peculiar to a captive of her sex. Name and date, of course, unknown. More ferocious, but unfortunately more historical, are the tales told of the grim ruins where the round watch-tower Artween castle looks down over a sheer precipice of nine hundred feet perpendicular to the rushing waters of the Chorok below. Here, scarce a century back, a

savage chief established himself, whose delight it was to force his prisoners to leap from the topmost turret. Poetical justice—let us hope justified in this instance by fact—represents this Georgian Adietz as receiving a similar treatment from his captors.

But rich as Gurjistan is in architectural monuments of this class, it is singularly poor in its relics of ecclesiastical buildings. Most of the churches hereabouts seem to have been like the mosques of the present day, either constructed wholly of wood or at least roofed with that material, and thus to have disappeared almost simultaneously with the religion that they represented. Here and there a colony of Armenian monks—for of Georgian monks and ascetics we find no trace, probably they were as rare under the old symbol as Georgian Mollahs and Muftis are under the new; nations change their creed more readily than their character—had established themselves, and have left some specimens of their not ungraceful nor undignified art; but of Georgian churches proper, I do not think that more than a dozen ruins are to be seen throughout the entire region. Four or five of these I explored, and in all the apse, or east end alone still was or had been vaulted roughly enough; the nave or body of the building had evidently been covered with timber. The arch, where it occurs, is generally pointed; the scant ornamentation on the doorposts or round the windows consists of shallow-eared Runic knots, or a conventional vine-pattern. What, however, distinguishes these Georgian churches, such as they are, from any others with which I am acquainted in the East, is a square belfry tower, forty or fifty feet high, placed at, and united with the west end, while the principal entry, contrary to Greek usage, is on one side of the edifice, so that the whole bears a strong likeness to an old village Norfolk or Suffolk church. Belfry-towers are rare things throughout the East, but when they do occur they are always, except in Gurjistan, separated altogether from the main building, like the famous Campanile at Florence. A fine example of the kind is afforded by the Byzantine church, now a Mosque, of St. Sophia, at Trebizond, the work of the Emperor Manuel I. in the thirteenth century, where the square tower, with its open lantern a-top, is full seventy feet in height, and stands at a distance of forty paces from the western porch.

Of the process by which this numerous, amiable, and fairly intelligent population was severed from Christendom and incorporated into Islam, no record remains. This much is certain: that a hundred and fifty years ago, according to their own statement, and even later I should think, judging by the comparative freshness of the church ruins in a climate where damp, heavy rains and snow, and a vegetation rivalling the luxuriance of Yucatan conspire to hasten the work of disintegration and decay, they were all Christians. It is equally certain that at the present day, they are all without exception Mahometans. No compulsion, no invasion, even, is either mentioned in history, or alluded to by tradition; and, which is stranger still, no extension of the Turkish Empire was then taking place eastward; on the contrary, it was rather losing ground. Could the dread of Russian encroachment, first felt along the northern Georgian frontier about that time, have driven these tribes to seek closer alliance and protection with the Turks by means of religious union? Possibly their Christianity sat as lightly on them then as their Mahometanism does now. They themselves have a story that a very eloquent preacher, and holy man, came among them, and converted them all to Islam by his sermons. "Non-sense," said I to a young Georgian beg, who had told me the tale with a very creditable amount of gravity, "that can never have been the cause. You know as well as I do that no Christian becomes a Mahometan, and *vice versa*, except it be from fear of imminent danger, or hope of material advantage. In the absence of these, the finest sermons would convert nobody; and as to proofs and miracles, you are aware that the two creeds are much on a par." He laughed, and answered, "Of course there was some motive of the other kind, but of what it was we have no record left."

In fact, for about fourteen centuries, from the days of Chosroes and Justinian, down to our own time, this mountain group has resembled an island, round which the eddying waves of frontier war have raged almost without ceasing, but have never wholly overflowed. Byzantines and Persians, Turkomans and Byzantines, Turks and Persians again, Russians and Turks, have all fought around them, retreated, or conquered; while they, secure in their almost inaccessible labyrinth of ravine and crag, have taken no more share in the strife around, than

by making or repelling an occasional foray; and, when victory had declared itself for the one or the other of their belligerent neighbours, paying as little tribute and obedience as possible to their new suzerain, whoever he might be.

To the Osmanlee Sultan, the "Padi-shah" of the Mahometan world, so long as he was content to rule them after their own fashion, that is, through the medium of their own born chiefs and begs, the Georgian Muslims were at first attached with proper neophytic fervour. Of this they gave repeated proof during the many wars, or, one might almost say, the one long war, which from the close of the last century to the middle of this, burned or smouldered along the land-line, and ended by giving the entire Southern Caucasus, with its fair plains adjoining, to Russian dominion. All this time the Mahometan Georgians on the south and west kept up a guerilla warfare, less ferocious, but hardly less persistent, than that maintained by the Circassian tribes on the east and north. But when the Ottoman Government changed its type from semi-feudal to bureaucratic, and administration merged in mere organized fiscal extortion, with the governing Pashas and other Stamboolee officials for its agents, the old spell of loyalty was broken, and Georgian eyes are now more often and more longingly turned to Tiflis than to Constantinople.

Indeed, without a degree of provincial tact which a pseudo-centralized government can hardly be expected to possess, this state of things was, sooner or later, inevitable. From the noblest beg to the meanest peasant there is hardly a Georgian who has not relations, or at least clansmen, under Russian rule across the frontier, with whom he is in constant correspondence of visits made and returned, and from whom he learns the transterminal existence of a state of prosperity and progress which he cannot but feel contrasts bitterly with the poverty and ignorance to which he himself, the Osmanlee subject, is condemned. For, in spite of frontier-guards, passport regulations, and military "cordon," mutual intercourse between Russian Georgia and Turkish Gurjistan is constant and intimate; nor does difference of creed, or, officially speaking, of nationality, much impair the sympathy of a common origin. "Blood is thicker than water" with the clansmen of the east as with the clansmen of the north. It is amusing enough to see, as I often have, a Russian-

ized Georgian, in big clumsy boots, long-skirted coat, and dirty forage-cap, enter the rickety but carpeted divan of a Mahometan kinsman, who in the much more picturesque, but less civilized-looking dress of Asiatic fashion, rises to embrace him. It is Burns' Cæsar and Luath over again; and there is no want of cordiality or respect on either side.

Meanwhile the attachment of the peasantry—the devotion would be an exacter word—to their own hereditary chiefs or begs, though shorn of their feudal rank and mulcted of their ancestral lands, is strong as ever; indeed, the measures taken by the Ottoman Government to weaken it, have had a contrary effect, by supplying a new tie between nobles and people—that of common dissatisfaction. Both classes have certainly a sufficiently long list of grievances against their black-coated Stamboolee masters, whose conduct is such that it can often be only explained by a settled determination to alienate the affections of these frontier tribes, and to drive them straight into the arms of Russia, who, for her part, is ready enough to receive them.

A Georgian beg, one of the most influential in the land, and chief of an important border clan, had, after much brave guerilla fighting against the Russians in '55, at last thrown himself, with several of his followers, into the besieged fortress of Kars, and did his duty manfully in its defence. When, after the events with which all are familiar, the place surrendered to famine, the beg—I purposely abstain from names—and his men became, of course, prisoners of war with the rest. Thus they remained four or five days; but when the time came for marching the captured garrison off to Tiflis, or other secure places in the Caucasus, the Georgians were, on the contrary, set free; the Russian general declaring with a polite generosity that might have been a useful lesson to some other generals nearer home, in a more recent war, that his hostilities regarded the regular troops only; and that the beg and his clansmen being irregular, he held them non-combatants, like any other peaceful inhabitants of the Turkish Empire, and consequently not liable to the penalties of war. With this he dismissed them, disarmed of course, but not even under parole, to go home, or wherever else they might think best.

The policy, as well as the humanity of this conduct is evident enough; but it is difficult to perceive either the humanity

or the policy of the Turkish Government, which, as soon as the war was over, rewarded the beg's service by a fine and imprisonment, on the ground that he must have been in treasonable correspondence with the Russians, otherwise he would not have met with such lenient treatment at their hands.

"Upon my word," said the beg to me, "had I been minded to betray the country to the Russians, I should have had no need of underhand doings: for there was not a man among the villagers who did not wish it, and I do not think the Turks could have done much to hinder us just then. But after all," he continued, "I have reason to be more satisfied with them than with the Russians; for the former, at least, by shutting me up in prison, paid me the compliment of showing that they considered me a person of some consequence; whereas, I never felt so small in my life as when the Russian general told me to go free, without doing me the honour of sending me under guard to Tiflis, and evidently implied that he did not care either for my having fought against him, or whether I might not fight again in the future."

Let us pay this gentleman — nobleman I mean — a visit, and see how he lives in the meanwhile.

It is mild summer, and the beg has left his winter residence in the thick woods, some twelve miles distant from the Russian frontier, and has gone, as his wont is, to pass the hotter months of the year under canvas amid the mountain pastures beyond the pine range, where at a height of between eight and nine thousand feet above the sea — his winter house is at the moderate elevation of four thousand — he looks after his numerous herds, and holds a kind of open court, much frequented by all the chiefs from the districts around, far and near. We, his visitors, are a large party, begs, aghas, and "delikans," or "wild-bloods," *i.e.* dashing young bachelors, some pure Georgian, others half-Georgian, half-Turkoman, by race. As we ride up the steep grassy slopes I notice, at a height of more than seven thousand feet, where even the July air blows keenly, and where no peasant now would venture to winter it from October to April, the ruins, or traces rather, of two large villages, and a stone church, an indication amongst, I regret to say, many similar, that the climate of these regions — as, I believe, of some other longitudes — has gradually but notably cooled during the last few

centuries; though whether from a general diminution of solar heat, according to Professor Thomson's alarming theory, to culminate in the realization of Byron's ghastly dream, or whether owing to some transpositions of land and sea in our Northern hemisphere, to take Lyell's more consolatory view of the matter, I do not pretend to decide.

At last we have reached the top; the brisk air, so different from that of the heated valleys below, has in a manner intoxicated our horses, who, instead of showing weariness after so hard a climb, are squealing, neighing, rearing, bounding; it is all the riders can do to hold them in. Before spreads a wide undulating table-land; it reaches for miles and miles away, till it slopes off eastward into Russian Georgia, and westward sinks into the hollows of Showshet, where dwell the loveliest, but not the austere women, and the handsomest, but not the most virtuous men of Georgian race. Far north, its downward dip is clothed with forest to the fever-stricken coast of the Black Sea. But right in front of us is a tent, large and black, with three or four smaller tents on a row behind; these are evidently for women, attendants, and domestic life, while the large one is the "salamlik," or general parlor, of the beg himself. Close by a little granite ridge cuts knife-like through the turf; and from under it wells out a spring of water, crystal clear, and icy cold.

The beg, whose ancestral possessions equal in extent Lincolnshire at least, and whose word even now, let who may be the official governor, is law over the whole frontier land, rises and comes forward to greet his guests. What a splendid head he has. I have seen something of the kind among the demigods of Greco-Roman sculpture. Advancing age has deprived his form of the supple activity which gave it a grace remarkable even among Georgians in youth, but has hardly diminished his passion for horsemanship and every form of bodily exercise. To this he adds a degree of mechanical skill that a trained workman might envy. For one friend he himself, unassisted, manufactures a beautifully-wrought sabre, blade, and hilt; for another a pair of pistols; for a third a silver-mounted clarionet. Then he sets to work on the construction of a sailing-boat, and when finished, sails it on a cruise of discovery all over the great mountain lake of Childer, close by, sound-

ing everywhere to determine what the real depth of the water, commonly said to be unfathomable (but he found it, as he told me, twenty-seven fathoms at most), may be; and whether the traditional city, said to be submerged beneath, is really there. Besides these amusements come farming, building, planting, sheep-breeding, cattle-tending, horse-rearing, and even—in which he has done wonders—road-making: and yet, various as these occupations are, the result falsifies the common saying about such attempts, by proving him master, not of none, but of all. Lastly he is—be the nominal Governor of Osmanlee creation who he may—the ultimate tribunal of appeal throughout the whole eastern half of Gurjistan; the arbiter of disputes, director of councils, social and political head of the little nation.

Begs and not-begs, noble, gentle, or simple, we are seated in the tent; its hangings are of silk, beautifully embroidered, and still bright in colour, the youthful labour of the chief's aunt, who died a few years since at the respectable age of ninety, or thereabouts. Coffee is served round for form's sake; then wine, spirits, and a sort of fruit-luncheon appear; and with a remark that "a tent is liberty-hall, and there is nothing to hinder our enjoying ourselves as we choose," the Beg sets the example of jollity in word and deed. In rush half-a-dozen children, four boys and two girls, one of the latter a real beauty, their ages between fifteen and five; these are the younger ones of the beg's numerous family; the elder sons are looking after the farms elsewhere. The biggest of the boys here present, a fair curly-headed lad, takes up at his father's orders, a book of Persian poetry, and begins translating it off into fluent Turkish: I hope the version is a correct one; if not, I cannot rectify it. Two other pretty boys perform a clarionet duet, on instruments of their father's making, selecting an English air—at least they tell me it is one—in my honour; while the smallest imp turns somersets, stands on his head, and goes through other gymnastic feats. The girls sit on their father's knees, or tease such of the guests as they are familiar with. Other visitors drop in, some on business, some on amusement; the day goes merrily by. But before the last slant sunbeams have died off the height, a huge wood-fire is lighted before the entrance of the tent, a necessary precaution against the keen cold outside; a plentiful supper is served;

and drinking, with talk and music, resumed till midnight. Georgia Mahometanism is not very deep in the grain; besides the event, coming sooner or later, of Russian annexation, has already cast its shadow before.

Yet our host, and several others now under the same canvas, fought bravely, and adventured freely the lives which many of their kinsmen lost, on the Turkish side, fifteen years ago. Now not one of them would draw a sword. "We mean to look on and enjoy the fun," say they, when questioned as to the part they would take were another war to break out between the empires. Perhaps this might not really prove their line of conduct, if put to the test, for men do not always keep to what they have forecast when the crisis actually comes; but there is no doubt that these words do very correctly sum up their present feeling.

Indeed it would be hard to say why they should think or feel differently. The Ottoman Government has taken away their past, and offers them no hopeful future. Besides, how abstain from comparing their own condition with that of their kinsmen on the other side of the frontier close at hand? The contrast is suggestive and seductive in one.

"Well, about myself, I do not care so much," says the beg, as after long talk we sat, surrounded by horizontal sleeping figures in the red glare of the heaped wood embers by the door; "my career has pretty well wound itself up; but what on earth am I to do with these boys of mine? The estate is not much, hardly enough as matters go for the elder ones; the rest would become mere peasants, no better than those around them. Trade? That is not in our line; we know nothing about it; besides, there is none here of any kind. The army? the navy? you know what the average run of officers is in the Ottoman service; besides, my children, because they are mine, would be ill looked on, suspected, kept back in every way. How even am I to give them a decent education? where put them to school? At Constantinople?—I would rather see them dead than exposed to the chance, the certainty, of the taint of Osmanlee vice in that city. And if not at Constantinople, where? You will allow," he concluded, with a kind of laugh, "that the position of a Georgian noble in the Turkish Empire is a pleasant one; very."

As the chiefs, so the people. And it is for this reason that I have dwelt somewhat at length on the fortunes, ways, and

words of an individual; because, with no great modification, they are not only personal but general; and one may, to a certain extent, be taken as sample of all.

The Georgians are fond of agricultural labour of every kind, and skilful at it; and with a temperate climate, averaging that of central Italy, and a fertile soil, there is nothing, except the fatal administrative blight, that renders all landed property in Turkey unproductive and almost valueless, to hinder Gurjistan from rivalling or even excelling the fruitfulness of Imeritia and the gardens of Kutais. But what most distinguishes them is their skill in handicraft. Guns, pistols, swords, daggers, embroidery, silver-work, the staple articles of manufacture among a semi-barbarous people—for all these Georgia holds the first rank in the Anatolian market; and the primitive simplicity of the tools employed enhances the cunning of the worker's hand. Pity that it should not oftener occupy itself with more useful objects; but this defect, rightly understood, is not so much attributable to the artificers as to their surroundings. But for trade and commerce the Georgians show no aptitude, not even for shopkeeping; and the few shops—I do not think there are two hundred throughout all the villages—in Gurjistan are invariably kept by strangers, mostly Armenians, who come for a few months of speculative profit, and then go away again.

Nor have they—and this is of good augury for their prospects of civilization—any turn for a pastoral life; their flocks and herds are indeed numerous enough on the grassy mountain slopes, but they are invariably tended by hired Koordes. The Georgians have many of the instincts of a settled, none of those proper to a nomade race.

Social, fond of dress and show, of song and dance, of gatherings and merry-makings, of drink, too, and, I regret to say, of gambling they are but indifferent, though proselyte Mahometans, and the "revival," so marked in its increasing intensity among the Arab, the Indian, and, to a certain extent, among the Turkish and Turkoman races, has little or no existence in Gurjistan. Perhaps too they feel the eventuality of reunion under Russian sway to their Christian kinsmen across the border too near a probability to allow of much zeal for, so far as they in particular are concerned, the decaying fortunes of Islam. "We ourselves shall live and die Mahometans, but our children may

become whatever suits them best," is a common saying among them. It is also, so far as I know, peculiar to them among Muslims; certainly, I never heard the like of it elsewhere. The few Mollas, Muftes and the like in Gurjistan villages are, like the shopkeepers, from without, generally from the more earnest sea-coast of Lazistan, or the bigoted neighbourhood of Trebizond.

Of Georgian morality, in the strict sense of the word, "least said," is, I fear, "soonest mended." Little indeed, among people so situated, could be looked for, and little is to be found. While the men are habitually out in the fields, or clambering the tall beech-trees to look after their favourite bee-hives—the honey of Gurjistan is first-rate—nighed high up in some forked branch among the pale green shades, the women at home have it all their own way, and it is too often the broad one. Not rarely too these, what we may charitably term faults, coming in collision with justly aroused jealousy, result in tragic crime. Many instances, needless to repeat here, were told me. In one village an entire family had been exterminated: in another, the brothers of the faithless wife, after fatally avenging the family disgrace, had turned brigands. This feature of Georgian character has however not only its black, but, such is human nature, its brighter side; a rank weed crop may give hope of a fruitful soil beneath; a polished marble slab more often covers dry bones only.

Besides, law there is none to speak of, and every man, every man-child even, is armed. Schools, too, except a very few—a dozen at most throughout the whole breadth of the land—of the most primary kind, do not here exist and there are no teachers in Gurjistan but Need and Passion, no lessons taught but the spade, the sickle, the loom, the forge, the knife, and the ever-loaded gun. As for Government—the official or Ottoman Government, I mean—it recognizes no obligation towards its Georgian subjects, except that of taxing them and collecting their taxes; a difficult task the last, it must be allowed, in mountains like these, where armed collectors have generally to be sent for the work, and whence they do not always return.

It is easier to pull down than to build up, to destroy than to restore. Latter-day Sultans have broken the links, clumsy ones it must be admitted, yet effective, which bound society together under the semi-feudal authority of the local begs,

and have substituted nothing but tax-gatherers and tithe-collectors in their stead. Only in out-of-the-way frontier districts like Gurjistan, far from Constantinople, and almost inaccessible to the official Effendee tribe, something of the old administration yet lingers on, powerless for good, powerful for evil. Shorn of lands, wealth, title, and except what the habitual respect of the peasants may still secure him, position, a Georgian beg is much too weak to compel order, though often strong enough to excite disturbance; enforce the law he cannot, break it he can and does. Hereditary rivalries, village-feuds, robberies, kidnapping, murder, all have here, as chance or circumstance may direct, almost unrestrained scope; the Ottoman, or Stamboul Government cannot put them down, and there is no other authorized power left to do it. In fact, when one wanders through these thicket-tangled paths, deep glens, lonely defiles, and dark forests, one wonders, not that deeds of violence and blood are sometimes done, but that they are not more frequent; not that Gurjistan travelling is considered venturesome, but that it is possible.

This is, however, chiefly among the natives themselves; a stranger has little to fear, a European least of all. The hospitality given—and it is always to be had for the asking—in one hamlet usually implies a kind of safe-conduct as far as the next, and so on to the end of the journey; and European wayfarers in particular are covered by the ægis of a salutary fear of after-enquiries, and penalties all the more dreaded because unknown.

In fact, during my long roving in Gurjistan proper, my own personal experience only records one adventure of the robber or brigand class; I mean in which I fell in with such. It was in the Ajarah region, the wildest corner of this wild land; and if I record it, I do so because the situation, though it was not exactly pleasant at the moment, was intensely picturesque; so picturesque indeed as almost to neutralize any disagreeable sensations that the incident might otherwise have caused.

The valley was such a lovely one; high mountain walls towering up to the sky in a mass of fir and beech above, and thick undergrowth below, all in the fullest, brightest leafage of summer, but now darkening with the first transparent shadows of a calm summer evening, and the rapid twilight of the South. The path,

narrow and rough, led alongside of a torrent till it came to a corner round a jutting mass of rock where another large and deep mountain stream crossed it from the right, while between precipice and water a clump of huge walnut trees spread out their wide branches, and deepened the gloom of the glen. A spot of exquisite beauty; but one in which it was awkward to fight, and impossible to try running away.

We had yet half an hour or so to go before we could reach the village where we intended halting for the night; but, enchanted with the scene around, I was riding slowly, with an armed attendant, a Trebizondian, in front, and a couple of negroes, with a native peasant, to bring up the rear. But just as we turned the rock, the thought struck me, "What a splendid post for an ambush!" and at the same instant my horse—a Turkoman bay—started, snuffed uneasily about him, and would have stopped. I urged him forward, but with difficulty. Suddenly two men, dressed in country cloth of that vandyke-brown colour which of all others is the least distinguishable at a distance among open-air objects, started up right in front, each presenting a shining long-barrelled gun, while two others simultaneously appeared, like toy figures set loose by a spring, from among the bushes alongside, and a third pair as promptly took post on the further bank of the torrent opposite, thus making six long guns, and all levelled, not to mention knives and pistols, of which each man had a pretty little arsenal in his girdle.

One of the men, a fine tall young fellow, as indeed they all seemed, came up to my Trebizondian guard in advance, and took hold of his bridle; another approached me, but observing that I put my hand on a knife in my belt, fell back; perhaps he thought I was going to draw a pistol, which would certainly have been the better weapon, but in fact I had none about me. However, the Trebizondian had, only he was too much frightened to use it, and, like a fool and a coward as he was, began to parley. This of course encouraged the would-be robbers, who now closed in, and matters began to look serious, when the two negroes, who now came up from behind the rock, perceiving that something was wrong, spurred forward, one with a pistol in hand, the other with a large drawn knife, and shouted out so savagely, that the Georgians, taken by surprise, fell back. We were now four

—five indeed, reckoning our peasant guide, but he, though armed, seemed inclined to keep out of the way, a friendly neutral, of all characters the most provoking to combatants. However, three of us had arms ready, and appeared inclined to use them; the Trebizondian, too, began to pluck up heart, and grow fierce. Hereon our assailants gave up, and retired into the thicket, leaving the ford open. That they might better see how little account we made of them, I called to them to stop, and asked how far it was yet to such and such a village, and whether we were on the right way. Two of them turned round, with villainously sulky faces, then thought better of it, and saying "All right, not far on," hurried off after their companions. By this time night was setting in, and in a few minutes more it was quite dark. Fortunately some peasants of the hamlet we were going to, having heard somehow or other of our approach, came to meet us with flaring pine-torches, and piloted us to our lodgings, which else we might have had some difficulty in finding.

"It was all a mistake; if the lads had known who you were they would never have meddled with you," was the apologetic remark of our host that night. I think he was right: anyhow though I remained a fortnight more scrambling up and down the Ajarah glens, and fell in with plenty of armed peasant bands, none of them again formed themselves into so scenic a group as that which gave such a peculiarly Georgian character to the wild valley in the still summer twilight.

Too much stress, however, should not be laid on defects which are accidental in a people, and the result rather of circumstances than of inherent disposition. An ill-governed frontier will seldom be found free from brigandage; nor can much respect to law be expected where law is, in a general way, equally unpromulgated and unenforced. To revert, not for proof's sake, but illustration, to a simile already employed, the very abundance of the weed-growth in the Georgian character, seems to warrant the hope of a fruitful and better crop, were the soil properly tilled and guarded. Something of the kind — much, indeed, by comparison — has already taken place in the neighbouring and kindred Russo-Georgian provinces of Imeritia and Gourul. And could the great and kindly historian of the *Decline and Fall* have added personal acquaintance with the inhabitants of Turkish Gurjistan to historical

research, he would, I think, while confirming the epithet of "handsome," have, with me, effaced, or at least modified, that of "worthless."

Indeed, though certainly little disposed to close with the invitation — one so often made in half-savage countries, and to me always most melancholy, because like the vague clutch of the drowning man at less than a straw — to remain and take up my abode among them, yet when I quitted the Georgians and their land it was with something of regret, and more of pity. Fortune has used them hardly in the past, and their future is at best doubtful. In "Prometheus Unbound" Shelley's Asia is hopeful as fair; and the fairest of her children ought, were the noble day-dream of the poet anything but a dream, to be of right the most hopeful also. But truer, I fear, though sadder is the Spirit that speaks by the same voice in a later dream that has, for the Ottoman Empire in Asia as in Europe, a much wider application than the "Hellas" of which it bears the name.

Oh cease! must hate and death return?

Cease! must men kill and die?

Cease! drain not to the dregs the urn

Of bitter prophecy!

The world is weary of the past —

Oh might it die or rest at last.

W. G. P.

From Temple Bar.

THE REGENT ORLEANS AND HIS AGE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "MIRABEAU."

THROUGH the closing years of Louis the Fourteenth's life France lay prostrate in a heavy drowse; the nightmare of Jesuitism, priestcraft, kingcraft, taxation, Maintenonism, and an all-pervading gloom, oppressing it with a leaden weight. It groaned and uttered stertorous cries; writhed a little; upon which its burden pressed still heavier, threatening it with annihilation. The passing bell that tolled the death of the "Grand Monarque" aroused it from its slumbers and exorcised the demons. It awoke, rubbed its dazed and swollen eyes, stretched its cramped limbs, and looked around. And lo! it discovered that the world in which it had fallen asleep — the world of him who had but now passed through the portals of eternity — had drifted away, and those awful gates, whose clang yet reverberated through Europe, had closed forever upon it as well as upon him.

With Louis the Fourteenth terminates a distinct epoch in the history of France. Upon the page which records that death FINIS is written. Close the book; rest and reflect, O reader! For when thou shalt open the next volume thou wilt be like the newly-awakened slumberer, transported into another world, the world of the Regency! Between that rigid, sombre, stiff-necked age of forms, and this joyous, sparkling, lithesome age of unconstraint, there is no pause, no gradual relaxing or blending; the transformation is Ovidian, or rather pantomimic; now a crabbed old man, now agile sparkling harlequin; the sombre dress vanishes and all is spangles and dazzling colours.

The Spirit of the Eighteenth Century, which the old king looked upon as a hell-born chimera, and consigned to the Bastille under a *lettre de cachet*, has burst its bounds. And its strange weird aspect might well have frightened a priest-ridden old king. Beautiful as Circe, its alluring smile and wanton eyes firing men's souls with delirious passion and enticing them on to perdition; a devilish, mocking sneer curls its voluptuous lips, from which flows ribald blasphemy. Unbelief and defiance of God are written upon its brazen forehead, and beneath its dainty silks and satins is the corruption of death. How feately it trips among the fountains and statues and parterres of Versailles, through the shady coverts and moonlit glades of the Bois de Boulogne, or over the costly carpets in the gilded and crystallised salons at the Palais Royal! — ever laughing its mocking sinister laugh or poisoning the air with its hideous *bon mots*, high priestess at the *petits soupers* — Circe wallowing among her swine. But by-and-by, the old classic fable shall be reversed, and Circe shall herself be transformed by her own poison into a monster; the dainty silks shall give place to filthy rags, the powdered wigs to matted elf locks, the rose-blush cheeks shall be grimy and famine clawed, the lascivious eyes shall be lambent with wolfish fire; Madame la Marquise shall be Jeanne Sainte-Antoine, and as such shall sink into a sea of blood, and so disappear from the world.

But, true to the sublime Zoroastrian duality, with this evil spirit is associated another, the Spirit of Free Inquiry; a spirit that has long been abroad in England and in Holland, but has been priest-driven out of France, although some of its greatest apostles are children of that soil. Descartes, following in the steps

of our own Bacon, has overturned the old conservative world of Aristotelian philosophy, and proclaims that nought shall be accepted as truth until inductively proved so. Fréret and Fourmont, the latter a profound student of Chinese history, has attacked the received chronology. Barbeyrac, an enthusiastic Calvinist, who has been exiled by the revocation of the Edict of Nantes, has written an important work upon the duties of men and citizens, and has translated into French several Dutch books upon liberty of conscience and the rights of the people. Montesquieu is holding up the English form of popular government to the admiration of his countrymen; others eulogize the federative system of Holland; some the republican form of Geneva; while others teach that happiness can only be found in the sensual godless school of the Epicureans. There has not been such an earthquake in the human mind since the Reformation.

But let us pass from political generalities to biographical particularities.

Had not Philippe d'Orléans been the nephew of Louis the Fourteenth he would undoubtedly have been a great man, perhaps a good one. But Louis — haunted throughout his life by the memories of those stormy Fronde days, by his sufferings therein, and by the shadows of those rebellious princes of the blood royal who had warred against royal authority — loved not cleverness in his kinsmen, and whenever it appeared did his best to crush it into mediocrity. We are too apt to regard "the Regent" as a mere sensualist — a Silenus, and nothing more. Such an estimate is untrue and unjust. Let not the reader be alarmed: I am not about to whitewash another historical character; I am only about to show what he *was* and *might have been* as well as what he *became*.

Philippe, né Duc de Chartres, was born in the year 1674. A strange fatality attended his education, five *gouverneurs* dying one after another, in order, it would seem, to make way for the evil mentor of his life, the Abbé Dubois. This last of his tutors — the son of an apothecary of Auvergne, at twelve the domestic of the principal of the College de Saint-Michel, Paris, in early manhood the preceptor of a merchant's son, later on governor to a royal duke, then cardinal, then prime minister of France — is thus graphically painted by Saint-Simon: — the colours mayhap are a little heightened, but the drawing is true to nature:

The Abbé Dubois was a little, lean, slender, mean-looking man, with a shrewd weasel-face and a fair peruke. Every vice fought within him for mastery. Avarice, debauchery, ambition were his gods, treachery and flattery his means, impiety his relaxation, and the belief that probity and honesty are mere fantasies which people assume, but which have no real existence in any one, his maxim, in consequence of which he regarded all means as justifiable in use. He excelled in low intrigues; he lived among—was unable to exist without them; but in all his intrigues he had an object which he pursued with a patience which was exhausted only in success, unless indeed while groping in the depths and the darkness he saw daylight clearer by opening another passage. He would utter the most impudent lie with a simple, straight-forward, sincere, and often modest manner. He would have spoken gracefully and easily if, while endeavouring to penetrate the thought of others, the fear of saying more than he desired had not accustomed him to feign a stammer which disfigured his speech, rendering it, when he spoke of important affairs, insupportable and sometimes unintelligible. He was witty, well read, with great knowledge of the world; insinuating and desirous to please; but all was spoiled by that air of falseness which surrounded all he did and said. Evil by reflection, nature, and reason, treacherous and ungrateful, an adept in the invention of every atrocity, shameless being caught in the fact. Desiring all, envying and wishing to plunder all. When afterwards he had no need of constraint the world saw to what a point he carried his selfishness, his debauchery, how much he despised his master and the state, and how he sacrificed everybody and everything without exception to himself, to his credit, to his power, to his absolute authority, to his pomp, to his avarice, to his fears, to his hates.*

Such was the governor who, having insinuated himself into the good graces of Monsieur and Madame, was appointed to complete the education of young Philippe. The boy gave signs of great promise. He excelled in all his studies—in geometry, in chemistry, in painting, in poetry, in music; his manners were elegant, affable. His courage was daring, and in all appertaining to the profession of arms he showed rare genius, a foresight almost intuitive, and an energy and rapidity of execution that insured success. At the siege of Mons, which took place when he was only eighteen, at Steinkirk and at Nerwinde, he greatly distinguished himself—too greatly to find favour with his august uncle, whom he too forcibly reminded of the youth of

the great Condé. He was not permitted to join the campaign of 1694. And so, with a heart full of bitterness, and of a burning desire to show his contempt for the King, and for all the King most revered, which, at this time, were the outward forms of religion, he remained in Paris, every noble faculty rusting in idleness, with his Mephistophelian tutor ever by his side to feed his infamous pleasures to repletion. To be master of the Prince the Abbé thought the surest plan was to assimilate him as much as possible to himself. He taught him to despise all duties and decencies; he persuaded him that he had too much wit to be the dupe of religion, which, according to his account, was a mere political invention to frighten fools and to hold the people in submission; he taught him that honesty in men and virtue in women were only chimeras, and that licentiousness, falsehood, artifice, infidelity, perfidy, were the essentials of worldly wisdom. His marriage with Mademoiselle de Blois, second daughter of Madame de Montespan, a woman cold, apathetic, indolent, egotistical, arrogant, who fancied that all the world, her husband included, should bow down in humble adoration before her—a marriage distasteful to the young Duke and violently opposed by his mother—this marriage completed his moral ruin. Day by day he conceived a greater distaste for his wife, delivered himself up more and more to vile dissipation, and day by day he sank deeper and deeper into the soul-rotting sloughs of iniquity.

By-and-by there happened an event which aroused him out of his lethargy. Under the dominion of French intrigues Charles the Second of Spain had, by will, set aside the contingent rights of the Duc d'Orléans to the crown of Spain in favour of Philip of Anjou, second son of the Dauphin. Orléans bestirred himself to assert his rights, and after a time obtained the reversion of the crown after the Duke of Anjou's death. Upon the demise of Charles began the War of the Spanish Succession, and Louis, it is presumable, not thinking it prudent to overlook the great military talents of his nephew, appointed him to the command of the Army of Italy.

But there, followed by the distrust of the King and hampered by the ignorant perverseness of his colleagues, Marsin and La Feuillade, his foresight and sagacity were completely nullified. At length, wearied by the constant rejection of all his councils, he was about to

* This description is abridged from the original, the idiomatic and epigrammatic force of which it is impossible to convey in a translation.

throw up his command in disgust when he received tidings of the advance of Prince Eugène. He proposed to Marsin that they should at once march against him. The Maréchal refused, and forbade any of his troops to stir. The enemy commenced the attack. Marsin was so seriously wounded at the commencement of the battle as to necessitate his removal from the field. La Feuillade ran hither and thither, tearing his hair in a state of distraction, unable to give an order. Upon which the Duke took upon himself the sole command. "He did wonders," says Saint-Simon; "exposed himself to the heaviest fire with a *sang-froid* which saw all and distinguished all, which led him to every part of the ground where his presence was required to sustain and encourage — an example which animated both officers and soldiers. Wounded, at first slightly in the hip, afterwards dangerously in the wrist, he was still undaunted. Seeing the lines begin to waver he called the officers by name, animated the soldiers by his voice, and himself brought up the squadrons and battalions to the charge." Spite of all his efforts, however, thanks to the previous obstinacy of his colleagues, the day was lost; but the Duke's coolness and presence of mind stood him in equally good stead in conducting the retreat as in directing the battle.

Ultimately, after enduring new annoyances and opposition at the hands of these *incompétents*, he was recalled to France. But not even royal jealousy could attach a reproach to his courage or conduct throughout the campaign. He was warmly welcomed and soon afterwards sent to command the army in Spain, with absolute authority. Here his arms were crowned with success, and his gentleness, justice, liberality, bravery, unintermitted vigilance and labour — which rested neither night nor day — and his splendid military talents, made him adored by officers and men.

In the meantime Louis was growing uneasy at this popularity, and not without a cause. Secret overtures had been made to the Duke by some of the leading nobles of Spain to mount the throne of that country, to which overtures he had turned a somewhat willing ear. News of the design was carried to France and raised amongst his enemies a terrible storm against him. Several arrests were made among his agents; he himself was recalled, and amidst the din of cabals sank once more into his old life of idle,

soulless debauchery — a sad reverse of that noble picture of heroic courage and noble genius which we saw but now upon the battle-fields of Italy and Spain.

But in the midst of his sensual Lethe there burst upon him a storm more fierce and terrible than all that had gone before. The strange death of the Dauphine, followed soon afterwards by that of the Dauphin himself, excited rumours of poison, and suspicion fell upon Orléans. These suspicions, artfully fomented by Madame de Maintenon and the Duc de Maine, were rendered probable by a mania which was upon him just then for experimental chemistry. At the funeral of the Prince so furious were the people against the Duke that fears were entertained for his life. The courtiers shunned him as a leper, the mob execrated him; all fell from him save Saint-Simon, and he stood alone in the Court, a common target at which malice unceasingly shot its deadly arrows. No doubt, however, can now rest upon the mind of the historical student that these accusations were totally false and groundless. It does not come within the scope of so brief a paper as this to enter into the pros and cons of the subject, but, as Saint-Simon justly remarks, and substantiates by reasons, the Duc de Maine was more interested in the death of the Dauphin than was the Duc d'Orléans.

After a time the King of Spain expressed a desire to be reconciled to the Duke, and then a kind of family reconciliation was patched up. The consequence of which was that a twelvemonth previous to his death (August 1714) Louis made a will, leaving the regency, controlled by a council, to the Duc d'Orléans, and the guardianship of the infant heir to the throne, together with the command of the household troops, to the Duc de Maine.

Louis is dying, and the salons of the coming Regent are filled with sycophants, fawners, flatterers. One day, however, comes the news that Louis has rallied; that day the salons of the now receding Regent are empty. But three days afterwards (1st of September, 1715,) Louis the Fourteenth has passed away and all the world is crowding pell-mell in hot and breathless haste back to the Regent, ready to lick his boots, make footstools of their bodies, or undergo any kind of degradation, to win his august smiles. And these are the creatures of Maine and Maintenon, who a year or two before had shunned him as plague-spotten, and who

did their best to bring him to the scaffold ! And the mob, as usual, imitate their betters ; they no longer howl and roar against him, nor clamour for his life, nor insult his ears with horrible accusations and vile epithets, but raise their sweet voices instead in triumphant cheers and gratulations, singing

Vive notre régent !
Il est si débonnaire
Qu'il est comme un enfant
Qu'on tient par lisière,
Toujours,
La nuit et le jour.

These also would lick his boots, nay, clean the ground over which he walks with their tongues, carry him upon their shoulders, drag his carriage through the street, or perform any other asses' work, to ingratiate themselves into his favour.

All alike, high and low ; all sycophants and toadeaters, all ready enough to brave the weak and bow before the rod. Such has been man in all ages, and will be until the end of time.

The Duke was magnanimous, and received even the bitterness of his late foes with grace and cordiality. "The Regent does not revenge the injuries of the Duc d'Orléans," he said nobly ; and he kept his word.

But nevertheless he resolved to be master of the situation, and would not submit to be merely the president of a council of regency, which could at any time, by a majority, nullify his personal power. He protested in Parliament that the will was not in conformity with the King's last words ; that he was willing that his hands should be tied for *evil*, but not for *good*, and finished by declaring himself Regent with absolute authority. The declaration was ratified by the Parliament and approved by the people. He appropriated to himself the command of the household troops, and was henceforth master of France.

The rule of the new government was to do everything that had been tabooed by the old, and *vice versa*. It accorded protection to the Jansenists, annulled all *lettres de cachet*, edicts, and sentences of exile against them and the disciples of Port-Royal, and confided all ecclesiastical affairs to Noailles, Fleury, D'Aguesseau, and the Abbé Pucelle. Louis had confined within the narrowest possible limits the authority of Parliament, and interdicted the use of remonstrances ; the Regent restored its privileges. In a moment of enthusiasm he said that he

would govern only by its advice, and chose the greater number of his councillors from amongst its members. Nevertheless he did not keep his word in this respect. By entering into a close convention with George the First he abandoned the cause of the Stuarts, and sought peace for his war-ridden country. By the year 1718 he had reduced the debt by 400,000,000 livres. But so stupendous was the financial burden imposed upon the nation by the disastrous wars of the late reign that he could make no headway against it ; in vain he cut down pensions, vigilantly overlooked the accounts of the revenue farmers ; these things were but as bailing water out of the sea with an oyster-shell.

It was just at this time, when national bankruptcy was staring him in the face, that his attention was attracted by John Law and his scheme of paper currency. Law, who had traversed Europe with his plan, and had met with nothing but discouragement, had nevertheless accumulated a large fortune by gambling, and had, in 1716, settled with his brother in Paris, where he had opened a private bank and issued large quantities of bank notes, which enjoyed perfect credit. As soon as his proposals were unfolded to the Regent he embraced them with the utmost ardour ; he fancied that he had discovered the alchemist's secret and an antidote against all the national embarrassments. Up started the Mississippi Scheme—to develop the resources of Louisiana and the country bordering upon the Mississippi : 200,000 shares at 500 livres each. The promoters farmed the taxes, coined the money, monopolized the trade of all the possessions of the French East India Company ! So great was the demand for shares that 50,000 new ones were created, for which there were 300,000 applicants ; the dividend was 120 per cent. But Parliament refused to ratify the monetary edicts, forbade the interference of strangers in public affairs and all collusion between the royal treasury and the Scotchman's bank. Terrified by the hourly increasing mania for speculation, they appointed commissioners to seize upon Law and hang him. Orléans gave him an asylum in his own palace ; deprived the Duc de Noailles of the administration of finance, exiled D'Aguesseau, deprived the Duc de Maine of the superintendency of the young king's education, reduced him and his brother, the Count de Toulouse, to the rank of peers, punished all others

who had joined the Parliament in opposition to his darling scheme, and created the speculator comptroller-general of the finances of the kingdom.

The money madness was now at its height, multitudes of frenzied wretches craving for shares surrounded Law's house night and day; the population of Paris increased daily by thousands, until every kitchen, stable, and outhouse swarmed with newly-arrived provincials. Society was turned topsy-turvy; lackeys revelled in the luxury of dukes; beggars yesterday rolled in wealth to-day; men of the old *noblesse* rushed trembling and eager to the capital, selling fiefs and manors which had belonged to their names for ages to the bourgeois, to buy shares in the monstrous lottery. The bourgeois sold their shops and houses to grasp those promissory bits of paper; workmen bartered their tools for them, and disdained work since money could be obtained so easily. A wild frenzy, a craving thirst, a ravening hunger for gold seized upon all, mingling every class, beggar and bourgeois, noble and artisan, outcast and fine lady, youth and old age, roguery and respectability, in a wild saturnalian struggle for wealth.

The crash came at last, and the poor wretches awoke from their fever-dream to find all their earthly possessions reduced to scraps of worthless paper. Of course there were riots; when people discover that they have done something very idiotic they always fall into a rage and endeavour to make somebody else responsible for their own idiotcy; likewise, as a matter of course, they killed many innocent people and paraded the bodies before the Regent's palace in order to convince him that they had quite recovered their senses. "They are right," said Philippe to one of his councillors who was urging him to resort to harsh measures against the rioters. "They are very good to endure so many evils."

So many evils! Yes, for monetary troubles were not the worst that devastated France at that moment. An awful plague had broken out in Marseilles, which, for virulence and horror, cannot be surpassed in history. Between the 15th of August and the 30th of September (1720) thousands died daily. Upon the promenades, beneath the trees, among the fountains, unburied bodies lay seething under the burning sun, the streets were choked up with dead, the graves, filled to repletion, burst under the intense heat and vomited back their horrors.

Upon the Place de la Loge, fronting the Hôtel de Ville, more than fifteen hundred corpses were cast without sepulture, until the brave *chevalin*, Chevalier Rose, whose heroism has immortalized his name, having discovered certain hollows and vaults in some old Roman towers, brought to the spot a body of *forçats*, and, himself superintending the horrible work, cleared away and buried the ghastly human *débris*.

Let me now endeavour to conjure up before the reader's imagination a picture of French society as it was under the rule of the Regency. But before plunging into that ocean of iniquity, I will pause for a moment upon the one calm, peaceful spot, that out of the encircling raging sea rose like some tiny island, whose grassy flower-bespangled glades a single ray of sunshine, darting out of the cloud-covered heavens, illumined with a holy radiance, while all around was pitchy darkness and storm bellowings from the deep profound. That spot was the Louvre, the residence of the child king. Never before perhaps was youthful prince loved so enthusiastically by attendants and all who surrounded him. And this feeling was universal among the people; it was from this period that he won the title of "Well-beloved," which he held to the end, long after it had ceased to be anything but an ironical misnomer. Perhaps this sentiment had its origin in the striking contrast presented between that pure child-life and the awful depravity of the Court. His *gouvernante* was rigid devout Madame de Ventadour; his tutor the good pious Fleury, Bishop of Fréjus, from whom the boy could not endure to be separated for the briefest interval. The great preacher Massillon was his religious instructor. It was a mild, affectionate child, of soft and engaging manners, caring little for the rough games of his age, fond of horses, sheep, and above all, of a beautiful white Scotch dog, which had been given him by the English ambassador. He would listen for hours together with tearful eyes and trembling lips to the stories of saints and martyrs. Placing this picture side by side with that of the master of the *parc aux cerfs*, may we not exclaim in the words of Ophelia, "We know what we are, but we know not what we may be"? To the honour of Orléans be it said, that even he respected the purity of this young soul, which was deeply attached to him, and while in its presence put his baser nature out of sight. As soon as

the young King attained his majority, the Regent freely and honestly delivered all power into his hands. When he read the "Philippique" of La Grange Chancel he was unmoved by all its terrible accusations, until he came to the charge of attempting to poison the boy; that broke down his fortitude and he gave way to bitter tears.

At Scéaux, formerly the residence of Colbert, from whose family it was purchased by the late king for the Duc de Maine, the Duchess held a court, of which the manners, customs and amusements were those of the last age. It was the one old world spot, which innovation and new modes had not yet invaded. The *divertissements* were conceived in the old classic, frigid style: mythological fêtes, *grandes tableaux*, such as Louis had had performed before La Vallière in the early days of their love. Here reigned music and poetry and the old ceremonious gallantry, that last lingering element of chivalry. In summer no one was permitted to retire to bed until sunrise, and the company paraded the park all night, talking love and poetry, exchanging sallies of wit or improvising fêtes upon the water. All was grand and stately, and those who had not virtue at least assumed it. Both the gravest and most *spirituel* of French society frequented this retreat, among others a young man named Arouet, then first mounting the Parnassian steep, a frequenter of all companies, a mocker of all.

Thanks to Watteau and his school the beaux and belles of the first half of the eighteenth century are as familiar to our imaginations as the everyday frequenters of Pall Mall and Bond Street are to our eyes. Those pretty, coquettish, naïve, pink-and-white faces, with the rose-bud mouths so charmingly set off by the little black patches and the powdered, jewel-entwisted hair; those tiny feet encased in satin; the slender ankle so liberally displayed by the quilted, hoop-expanded petticoat, the gracefully tucked dress of rich bedowered silk or damask; the beaux with their fine gentleman air, their powdered queue wigs, their full-skirted, velvet, gold-embroidered coats, satin waistcoats and breeches, rolled silk stockings, high-heeled, diamond-buckled shoes, and jewel-hilted rapiers—how different these to the ladies and gentlemen of the old Court! Then the abodes of this sublimated humanity: the gilded *salons à la renaissance*, carpeted with luxurious productions of the looms of

Persia and Turkey, hung with flowing silk and damask, lit by dazzling crystal lustres, their glories multiplied in the splendid mirrors of Venice, satin couches, gilded furniture, candelabras, clocks, flower-baskets of gold, or ivory, or ebony; Chinese knicknacks, china monsters, porcelain, so exquisitely frail that a breath of wind might have shivered it. An infinite variety of moving costume gave life to the gorgeous picture. The officers of musketeers, in black velvet and silver *brandebourgs*; the chevaliers of the light horse, in pale blue and golden *baguettes*; the Swiss in scarlet; the abbés in black; the beaux and belles in every hue and form of dress that caprice and extravagance could suggest.

Gentlemen under the *régime* of Louis passed the greater portion of their lives in the toils and hardships of camp life.* The gentleman of the Regency awoke at noon in his bed of down, partook of chocolate and a light collation, after which he arose, and placing himself in the hands of four or five valets commenced his toilet. One assistant curled his peruke, a second handed him his silk stockings and shoes, a third his gold embroidered coat and vest, a fourth his slender rapier, a fifth his perfumed ruffles and handkerchief. Then came the visiting hour, which brought fops to admire themselves in his mirrors, to talk of their conquests, of Court scandal and of last night's revel; the toilet over, all proceeded to Court or otherwise whiled away time until the longed-for hour of supper came, from which at dawn their carriages carried home their senseless wine-besotted bodies. The lives of the ladies were similar. They also rose at noon with heads aching from the last night's excesses; performed their toilets in a charming boudoir hung round with rose-coloured silk, in which they received their gallants; *femmes de chambre* dressed their hair, clasped their white arms and necks with pearls and jewels; at their feet black boys, whose dusky skins contrasted so admirably with the pearly texture of their own, held Chinese fans of exquisite workmanship, while they arranged their patches in the mirrors, chatting of operas, gallantry, *petits soupers*—the universal theme—their beautiful lips too frequently polluted by coarse and disgusting *bon mots*. And these creatures were often mere girls, in the very first flush of youth and beauty!

* Seventeen thousand nobility perished in the wars of his reign.

Turn we now to "the master of the revels," the Regent himself. Saint-Simon, that immortal painter of the men and manners of that age, thus pictures Philippe d'Orléans; the date of the portrait is 1715, just previous to the King's death:

M. le Duc d'Orléans was not above the middle height, very stout without being fat, his air and carriage easy and very distinguished, his face full, agreeable, and very high coloured, his hair black, his peruke of the same hue. Although he danced badly, there was in his countenance, in his gestures, in his manners, an infinite grace which adorned his commonest actions. He was gentle, free, and easy of access. His voice was agreeable and his speech was wonderfully clear and fluent. In conversation he was equally at home whether the subject was passing events or the most abstract sciences, whether it was politics, finance, war, the court, arts, or mechanics. His knowledge of history and biography was enormous, his memory prodigious, whether for facts, names, or dates.

His model was Henry the Fourth, whom he imitated both in his virtues and vices; and the flattery to which he was alone susceptible was to be likened in features, manners, and achievements to that great king. In this lies the keynote of much of his character. Theoretically he loved a free government, and was ever praising the English constitution. He was not ambitious of regal power, for the Spanish affair was the suggestion of others, and the idea was quickly abandoned. His ambition, says Saint-Simon, "was to command while war lasted, and at other times to seek pleasure, without constraint to himself or to others." In his impiety he was ostentatious to affectation; for his most outrageous debauches he would select fasts and holy days. He paraded his contempt for sacred things. One Christmas he attended midnight mass with the King at Versailles. He was observed to be devoutly intent upon a book which all believed to be a missal. The next day a lady expressed to him the pleasure she had felt at seeing him thus devout. "You are very simple, madame," he replied, "it was Rabelais, which I had taken with me as a protection against ennui." The beauty of the chapel, the splendour of the spectacle, and the nobleness of the music, undoubtedly the finest that could be heard in Europe, were sufficient guarantees against ennui. He was notoriously false and insincere. He loved to set everybody by the ears, and thus lead

them on to the betrayal of one another's secrets. This created for him more enemies than any other of his vices. He was alike incapable of hate and love. The only person who ever exercised any real power over his mind was Dubois, and his power from first to last was, absolute. Unlike the late king, he was never in any way ruled by his mistresses, nor was he ever known, even in the most helpless moment of intoxication, to betray to them a state secret. "He was born *ennuyé*," says Saint-Simon; "he was so accustomed to live out of himself that he could not endure to *re-enter*." He could exist only in the movement and whirlwind of stirring events; he must be at the head of an army, or busied in preparations for a campaign, or in the noise and excitement of a debauch. Without bustle, tumult, some sort of excess, time hung insupportably heavy upon his hands. And yet his tastes and accomplishments were numerous and brilliant. He delighted in experimental chemistry, in distilling perfumes; he was an admirable painter, as well as connoisseur, and had collected works of art which both in number and value equalled those of the King himself. He was a passionate lover of music, and had composed more than one opera of no mean merit. "Never," to again quote Saint-Simon, "was man born with talents so numerous and so varied, and never was man such an idler, nor so entirely delivered up to ennui and nothingness."

To account for this unhappy contradiction, Madame his mother, who was a great reader of fairy lore, invented a pretty little fable. She said, that at his birth all the fairies had been summoned round her bed, but that, unfortunately, one old fairy, who had disappeared for such a very long time as to have quite slipped out of everybody's memory, was forgotten. Suddenly, however, she appeared, leaning upon her stick. Piqued at the universal forgetfulness, she revenged herself by rendering all the talents presented by the other fairies useless, not one of which, while preserving all, he was ever able to turn to good account.

The political life of the Regent commenced at one in the afternoon, the morning having passed in gradually arousing himself from the stupor of the previous night's debauch. After he had taken chocolate his brain cleared, and he was ready for business. His first visit was to the Louvre, to the young king, whom he always treated with the most

profound respect. There he would remain conversing about an hour, after which he attended the council of state; this despatched, he paid a visit either to his mother at Saint-Cloud, to the Duchesse de Berry at the Luxembourg, or to some of his other children, for all of whom he had a great affection. So passed the time until ten at night, the hour for supper.

The guests at these famous, or rather infamous, feasts, which almost rival in historical celebrity the epicurean banquets of Apicius or Lucullus, were usually restricted to twenty; but, as we shall presently see, this number was frequently increased *ad libitum*. They were selected from all, and from the most diverse, classes of society — nobles, poets, philosophers, wits, abbés, courtesans, court ladies. The apartments were furnished with the most costly voluptuousness, the tables loaded with magnificent plate, flowers, and the most delicious wines and viands. As a preparative for drinking, the *hanaf*, an immense goblet in the form of a barrel, hooped with gold and filled with wine, was handed from guest to guest, which goblet it was *de rigueur* to empty at the first round. Coarse *bon mots*, sallies of licentious wit, chiefly directed against religion and morality, in which each strove to outdo the other in irreverence and impiety, passed from mouth to mouth; the wild license momentarily increasing as the wine circulated, until the revel ended in helpless intoxication. This was the more decorous of the *petits soupers*. There were others which in numbers, riot, and indiscriminate gathering resembled an old Greek saturnalia or a performance of the mysteries of Aphrodite.

About this time Canaillac originated public balls. The opera house was built in the garden of the Palais Royal, and a private door afforded direct communication between the two buildings. The Regent frequently attended these balls, and through this entrance sometimes brought a company of the masquers to supper. Then strange noisy groups would gather pell-mell round the luxurious tables, and greedily devour the costly comestibles and choice wines: grisettes, danseuses, noble ladies in the motley attire of Chinese bayadères, nuns, fairies, Circassians; sacrilegious jests and wild laughter, a Babel of tongues, disputes, quarrels, sometimes blows; delirious mirth, oaths, blasphemy, bacchanalian songs, *posés plastiques*, unbridled license of all kinds,

stupefaction, swinish sleep, and a mass of human clay scattered, amidst other remnants of the feast, over satin couch and gorgeous carpet. More than once death joined in the party, and clasping some victim in his bony arms, spread shrieking horror and dismay amongst the revellers.

One of the wildest of these bacchanals was the Regent's daughter. Married at a very early age to the Duc de Berry, a good-natured but weak-minded prince, who was desperately fond of her, but whom she despised and hated her whole life — it was not a long one, only twenty-four years — was a horror of immorality. She was only nineteen when the Duke died, undoubtedly of poison; but by whom administered it would be difficult to say. Passionate, haughty, insufferably arrogant, she pretended to the rights of a queen. She was accompanied, when she passed through the streets, by the band of the musketeers, by the music of trumpets and cymbals. But with all that she was the slave of a little pimple-faced man, the Comte de Riom, to whom she was at length secretly united. One might have imagined him to be the avenger of the dead husband, he treated her with such utter and capricious tyranny; he ordered her toilet, her dresses, her every movement, and compelled her for the lightest offence to kneel at his feet and ask for pardon. Her summer residence was at La Muette, in the very centre of the Bois de Boulogne; for amidst all her dissipations she had a love for trees and solitude and the simple pleasures of country life. At times a sense of her enormities would overwhelm her; more than once she fled to the Carmelites of Chaillot to weep and pray, racked by a terrible remorse. But after a time her fierce passions would once more master her, and drag her back to the saturnalias, where all the past was quickly forgotten until wild gaiety lapsed again into wild despair. At length her health began to sink, but her dissipation only increased until death closed her terrible career. Her death was a great blow to Orléans, who was passionately attached to her.

The vices of the Fronde were those of factions, and arose out of the disorganization of society; the vices of the age of Louis were clothed in a garb of outward decency and were not regarded as things to be proud of; even over illicit amours was cast a veil of poetry and romance that concealed their grossness. But under the Regency vice was laurel-crowned. It was a reproach to a man not to be a

debauchee, not to nightly drink himself into a state of insensibility. The only churchman that Orléans expressed an admiration for was the Grand Prior, and that because for forty years he had never gone to bed sober. It was ridiculous in a woman to be wise, or modest, or virtuous; every lady of the Court had a nickname, gathered from the calendar of love, which concealed a licentious meaning; one was Sainte Facile, another Sainte Pleureuse, another Sainte Contente, etc. The poems and epigrams were not mere effusions of licentious wit; they stripped human frailty of every sentiment, every rag of decency, and not only presented it in its naked deformity, but bedaubed with vileness more than natural, with the very ordure of vice. Never since the last days of old Rome had human nature sunk so nearly to the level of the brute.

In the meanwhile the people looked with horror upon the godless rule, for the moral corruption had not yet descended to the bourgeois class, which was still composed of God-fearing men, amongst whom the marriage tie and the ordinances of religion still obtained respect. The Regent was hated. Paris was filled not only with lampoons and satires against him and his Court, but with terrible philippics, accusing him of crimes too hideous to be even glanced at in these pages. The most remarkable of these extant is that of La Grange Chancel, who expiated its composition by years of imprisonment. The young Arouet (Voltaire) then just rising into fame, with that audacious irony which always characterized the man, actually solicited the presence of Orléans and the Duchesse de Berry at the first representation of "Œdipus." They acceded to his request, and were equal to the occasion, joining in the tumultuous applause with which the play was greeted by an audience who applied every incident of the ghastly story to the Regent and his daughter; and to further testify his gratification with the work the Duke bestowed a pension upon the author.

At forty-six Philippe d'Orléans was a wreck, broken down in health and strength, his once handsome face blotched and carbuncled, his person heavy and obese. In vain the doctors entreated him to reform his mode of life. They warned him that he was in hourly danger of apoplexy; advised bleeding. "Come, to-morrow," was still his answer. One day—it was the 21st of December, 1723—he had dined heartily, and passed into

his cabinet in company with the Duchesse Falari; he complained of dulness, and requested her to tell him one of the pretty stories for the relation of which she was famous. She sat down at his feet, and resting her head upon his knees began. But she had scarcely completed the first sentence when the Duke's head fell forward upon his chest; she raised her eyes in affright, then springing to her feet, rushed out to call assistance. All in vain—he was dead!

So died, in the very prime of manhood, a man who might, but for evil training and the cruel jealousy of Louis the Fourteenth, have transmitted to posterity a name loaded with the honours of genius, instead of which it has become the symbol of all that is vicious and sensual.

From Temple Bar.

NICOLE VAGNON.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "PATTY."

THE evening is very still—the white-stemmed, silver-leaved birch-trees scarcely move a twig; only a ripple on the broad river, and the plash of its mimic waves on the much indented bank, tell that the wind has not quite gone to sleep with the sun, and may be hard at work before that luminary gets up again.

For the sun has set; it vanished a few minutes since among those dark hills behind Villequier. You cannot see Villequier from this side of the river; both church and houses nestle closely among the orchards that clothe the slope of these same hills, even down to the river bank; but the charming little Norman village lies just at the point where the Seine curves in its serpentine fashion on its way to Quillebœuf.

The sun has set behind Villequier, but it has left the opposite sky full of colour, and the soft rose tint spreads over the river till it melts in a yellow grey beneath the wooded heights of Caudebec.

These heights, sometimes clothed with ruddy oak and the still tender green of beech, sometimes white, where the limestone crag has chosen to reign undisturbed in savage ruggedness, continue almost without interruption from Caudebec to Villequier. The high road runs between them and the steep orchard-clothed river bank, so that, except where a break comes among the trees, darkness soon follows the sunset.

There is such a break just before you

reach the line of tall, slender-limbed birch-trees, and two persons, a man and a woman, are standing still, as if to enjoy the lovely light spread over sky and river. The rose tint is fading fast; in its place comes a tender luminous grey, too exquisite for earth. The tint on the water just below Villequier is deep olive now, and far on towards Caudebec, where the Seine again curves out of sight, it deepens in hue as the hills above grow darker against the pearl-tinted sky. But the man and woman are not looking at the river, nor at the yawning fern-fringed cave beside the high road, nor at the charming feature which a projecting strip of land, clothed with light foliage, gives the curving river; they do not even notice how wan and weird the tall birch-trees are against the beech-covered cliff that rises on the other side of the road, nor how mysteriously they bend forwards to the river. The two persons are looking only at one another, they are betrothed lovers, and their names are Jules Barrière and Nicole Vagnon.

"It grows late," the young man says, "and your mother will say I do not keep my word. I have said we shall be home by daylight. Come then, Nicole."

A sweet persuasive smile softens Jules' face. Nicole looks up, and she seems conquered by the look that meets her in his brown eyes. She smiles, but rather sadly, and puts her hand in his arm. They walk rapidly along the road to Villequier. They are well matched for height, both well grown and well made; but Jules is handsome, in the common acceptance of the word, and Nicole only pleasant-looking. Really they are just the same age, but Nicole's decided features, the absence of all bloom on her dark skin, make her look much older than Jules does. It seems as if nature had used the girl unfairly; her dark slate-coloured eyes would not have looked so misplaced with Jules' clear red and white skin; for though his cheeks are nearly as tawny as his luxuriant hair and beard, his forehead, just now when he raises his hat and wipes it with his blue handkerchief, is as white as a lady's hand. His dark melting brown eyes would have lightened Nicole's sallow skin. Jules has a straight nose too, and a regular mouth. Certainly, so far as mere beauty of face goes, they are an ill-matched pair.

They walk on silently; there are close-growing osiers instead of birches between them and the river, and the road is darker than it was near the cave. The cliffs

recede, and some sloping fields with hawthorne hedges border the left-hand side of the road. They pause before a large white gate set in the hedge. Half way between the cliff and the road a massive white house glimmers among trees, and some outbuildings in a group near at hand show that it is a farmstead.

"Are you coming in?" says the girl.

"Not to-night—I am late—there is no time." He speaks in a hurried weak voice, as if he were coining an excuse. "*Bon soir*, my beloved. I shall not many times more have to bid you good evening."

Nicole does not look tenderly up into the brown eyes which seem to become sweet so easily. She has drawn her hand from her lover's arm, and she twists her supple fingers together an instant before she speaks. "But, Jules,"—at the tone an annoyance which he tries not to show clouds all the sweetness in his eyes—"you have not answered me; are you going to the fête at La Mailleraye?"

"I cannot answer what I do not know, *ma petite*." But the jovial tone in his voice is forced. "If I do not meet with Floris, and if he does not ask me again, I shall probably keep out of it."

"Which means that you will let yourself be guided by circumstances instead of by what is right." At the impatient words Jules draws away, and turns his shoulder sulkily towards his well-beloved; in an instant Nicole's face changes to an expression of penitence: "Oh, how wrong, how wicked I am, to doubt you! But indeed I cannot like you to be with Floris Mercœur; he is so—so masterful, and, Jules, he is not good."

Jules swings round impatiently. "*Peste!* Because Floris is not in favour with Monsieur le Curé he is of course a lost soul. I know the jargon, Nicole, and it is very well for women. Trust me, *ma petite*," he says more gently, "I know how to guide myself." He puts both hands on her shoulders and ends his words in kisses; and yet, though the kisses are very loving, Nicole sighs heavily as she goes up to the house.

II.

A BENT, pale, withered woman creeps slowly along the road that winds beside the Seine between Caudebec and Villequier; she carries a basket in one hand, but with the other she leans heavily on a stick. The road is full of sunshine this morning, and the river sparkles along merrily as it shows here and there through the

thickly planted orchards that slope down to the water side. But the poor bent woman gives a sigh of relief at sight of the white gate of the Maison Blanche. The walk, with all its loveliness, has been too much for her failing strength.

The ground rises in a grassed hill inside the white gate, a sort of wild orchard, in the midst of which is a barn and a cider-press, and outside the barn a shed for cows and some small pigsties. There is a dog tied up a little way within the gate, and he sets up a bark at the sight of a visitor. A multitude of cocks and hens are walking about round the feet of a tall erect woman, who comes out of the barn and puts up one well-shaped brown hand to shield her proud blue eyes as she makes out the intruder.

No one would guess that the finely formed, handsome woman, with aquiline features and imperious bright eyes, is sister to the poor bent creature, with a face like a withered leaf, leaning now a minute on the gate before she mounts the slope. In dress there is not much apparent difference. Madame Vagnon has a gown of greyish green stuff and a lilac cotton apron, her sleeves are rolled back to her shoulders and show her shapely brown arms; her hair is gathered under a white handkerchief, which wreathes round her head and fastens with a small projecting horn just above each of the delicate ears. Her dress is rather what would seem to be suited to the cook instead of the mistress of the grand old stone house, which faces her as she stands at the door of the barn; but when she moves and walks towards the entrance gate which closes in the courtyard, stopping as she crosses the slope to nod to her sister below, Madame Vagnon looks like a queen in disguise.

"*Bon jour*, Henriette." She bends her stately head. "Stay there, and I will send Victor to carry thy basket."

Madame smiles a little as she goes in through the gates and takes her stately way across the *basse-cour*, making the pigeons fly up in a white cloud, from a nodding gossip they are having near the broken flight of steps to the top of the staircase tower.

"Victor, go down and fetch the basket for Mam'selle Henriette." To herself Madame thinks, as she goes up some steps into a broad flagged passage, "Of course she is tired; but if she would only live here she need never walk so far as Caudebec."

At the word, Victor, a merry-faced lad

in a blouse, who has been sweeping the *cour*, puts his broom against the wall and runs through the gate to obey his mistress.

He comes back soon with Henriette's basket, and then stands leaning against the gate, keeping it open with his shoulder till the lame woman appears.

"Thank you, my friend," she pants out her words. "Is Mam'selle Nicole at home?"

"Ah! for that I cannot tell, mam'selle. Mam'selle is in and out, and here and there, and all in a quarter of an hour."

"*Bien*," Henriette gives a gentle nod, and moves up into the house.

She finds Madame Vagnon waiting for her in a huge, stone-walled, stone-flagged room; the ceiling of dark oak, with heavy beams crossing one another; the fire-place is built out into the room, with a seat on each side within its projecting jambs, and a steep tiled roof atop. Facing the door is a broad window, recessed some depth in the splayed wall, and looking over the sloping garden below into the Seine; and above the doorway is an inscription carved in the stone, so defaced by time and hard usage as to be almost obliterated.

The sisters kiss on each cheek, and then Madame points to a low chair near the open window.

"Thou art tired."

"A little; and Nicole, she is well?"

There is such a wistful look as the lame woman asks this, that one would imagine Nicole to be a subject of much anxiety.

"Nicole is as well as usual." Madame Vagnon speaks with the extra calm of a person who knows that more has been intended by the question addressed to her than has been expressed in it.

"And — and — Augustine, I may not get a chance of speaking to thee alone after the dear child comes in — is the marriage to take place?"

Henriette's wasted hands have clasped themselves together while she speaks, and she bends forward over them with an imploring look in her poor faded eyes.

But Madame Vagnon has no sympathy with her sister's agitation, her own manner stiffens.

"Why not, Henriette? The world must go on in its appointed way, and its institutions must not be deranged and set aside at the will of one man or one woman. I have consented to Nicole's marriage with Jules Barrière, and the marriage must take place."

"But—but"—the woman with the withered-leaf face is plainly timid, for she bends lower, and seems to wince under her sister's imperious blue eyes—"Nicole does not look happy lately, and Jules Barrière is weak, too weak to be fit for a husband yet awhile. Augustine, I am afraid he is not good enough for our Nicole."

The curved lips tremble just a little; but Madame Vagnon's head is more erect than ever as she answers:

"If thou didst not shut thyself up so much, Henriette, thou wouldst know such talk is a folly. I tell thee the marriage is decided, and a girl who breaks such an engagement is not well thought of; it is against all rule."

"Rule! always rule, and what is thought by the world!" But Henriette only murmurs this to herself; she checks any outward expression.

Madame Vagnon has paused to reflect, she goes on speaking:

"I told thee that Jules Barrière was not fit for a husband when thou hast proposed him to me for Nicole; but my child loved him, and he has money and an *état*. I gave up my objections then—it was decided; certainly thou must not ask me to retract now, when even the wedding-day is fixed."

Henriette sighed. She looked very sad. "Thou wert wise and foreseeing, my sister; and I, in my foolishness, thought only of the separation of the two young hearts. It seemed to me that my Nicole's love must make the man who loved her worthy to be her husband; but I was wrong—I fear much that Jules is not fit."

"*Après ça*"—Madame had a provokingly calm smile. "It is the pastime of you unmarried women to cultivate sentiment; console thyself, Henriette, there is no sentiment in marriage. Jules and Nicole like one another; *bon*, Nicole will find enough to do when she is mistress of the first hotel in Caudebec; she will have no time for sentiment; her duties will be enough for Nicole. *Allons!*" Madame Vagnon smiled more genially, but a sadness sounded in her voice. "If I had time for sentiment, I too might regret that a de Launay should marry a clown—for Jules is of the peasantry though he has money; but I say to myself, 'This is folly.' Good blood does not lie, my Henriette, and Nicole will be as true a de Launay at the Hôtel du Quai as she would be here at the Maison Blanche."

"Thou wilt not let me share the benefit of that reasoning." Henriette spoke with a sly smile.

Madame had been standing beside her sister; she turned abruptly now, and took down a jug of old Rouen ware from a long shelf near the ceiling:

"That is different." She paused to blow the dust off the jug. "Thou art wrong in trying to earn a living all by thyself at Caudebec, because if thou hadst half the caps and *colifichets* of Caudebec to mend and get up, thou couldst not keep up a good appearance. No, Henriette, I say to thee again what I said when our parents died and my husband bought this Maison Blanche, 'Stay in it, it is a family inheritance, and thou couldst find work here without the need of slaving as thou dost at Caudebec.'"

"Thou art very good, Augustine, but we shall never understand one another about this." Henriette spoke meekly, but she was decided too. "Still I will tell thee the worst I know of Jules, and then thou canst not blame me after."

Madame's firm mouth quivered, but she stood still listening.

"He is idle, and he leaves his business for days to go with Floris Mercœur to shoot and fish; and Floris is a drunkard."

Madame threw back her head as if to repel the suggestion.

"Bah! bah! bah! Henriette, thou must stay here awhile and get clear of these Caudebec follies. If a white man consorts with a negro, he does not turn black. Thou canst not keep men under a glass case. Leave Jules to Nicole. I did not choose him, as thou knowest; but since all is arranged, I say the marriage must be."

III.

It is Sunday—Nicole's last Sabbath at the Maison Blanche. Her marriage is fixed for Wednesday, and Madame Vagnon, though she looks wholly unmoved, is in truth heavy-hearted at the thought of losing her daughter. But she has trained herself and Nicole too in the creed that feeling must always yield to duty, and so neither mother nor daughter betrays sorrow at the coming separation.

Nicole is strangely silent; she loves Jules, and she is to marry him on Wednesday, and yet all her light-hearted gaiety has fled. Her mother notices it, and then she says, in her calm, wise way:

"It is natural. Nicole feels the responsibility of her new life. Here she

is a simple farmer's daughter; after Wednesday she will be the head of a large household. But my Nicole will do her duty, wherever she is."

The only sign of feeling the mother gives is that, as they come out of church, she presses forward to touch the fingers which Nicole has just dipped in the *bénitier*, and then crosses herself devoutly.

In the afternoon Madame takes her accustomed nap, and Nicole strays into the garden. She has dressed herself with extra care this morning, and now she smiles rather sadly at her well-fitting black silk gown—the gown that Jules says becomes her so well. She looks at her watch. It is long past the time at which she expects her lover.

"He has met with Floris and they have gone to the fête, or he would have been here by now."

Nicole sighs, and then she tries hard to give up her own will—her own strong feeling, that because she dislikes Floris and shrinks from him he must be an unsafe companion.

"But Jules is to guide me and be my head. I must not doubt his wisdom." And Nicole forces herself to dismiss her doubts and fears as fancies, and to believe that when she is Jules' wife she will be able to trust him entirely. She loves her gay, sweet-natured, handsome lover so very dearly that it is easy to think only of him and the bliss of her future life with him; for Nicole is not like her mother in feeling. She does not look forward to being the mistress of the Hôtel du Quai; she only thinks that after Wednesday she shall never be parted from Jules.

She wanders idly among the balsam plots, gay with heavy flowers, and the tall hollyhocks, with rose and straw-colour blossoms, keeping guard like stately sentinels beneath the broad open windows of the dark rooms within.

As she passes beneath the kitchen window she hears her name called. She looks up; Madame Vagnon stands looking at her, her erect figure and defined features so relieved by the dark void behind, and so framed in by the vine and Virginia creeper that meet over the window, that the effect is almost metallic in its crispness.

"Nicole, I asked Henriette to be with us to-day, and she has refused; but I know she longs sorely after thee, and she has only refused because she feared to be *de trop*. I will go with thee half way to Caudebec, and thou shalt go on, and

Henriette will return with thee and stay till the marriage is ended. This pleases thee, my child?"

There is a tender light in Madame's eyes as she speaks, and Nicole longs to clasp her arms round her mother's neck; but Madame Vagnon would not have suffered her feelings to appear if she had not put a safe distance between herself and any demonstration of affection.

"Thank you, my mother. *La tante* Henriette will be glad. The heat has made her too weak to walk from Caudebec and back in a day."

They walked on silently for nearly a mile, until they came to a narrow opening leading down to the river. Just within the opening was a small calvary, and, shaded by a group of trees, behind this appeared the open grate of a roadside chapel. Madame Vagnon and Nicole turned in here and knelt down on the long low wooden bench in front of the grating. On each side of the chapel altar and on the walls were votive offerings, chiefly of sailors and their wives and children; thank-offerings—many of them dating from far-off days—for preservation from the much-dreaded *maskaret* of the Seine—the *flot*, as the peasantry call the terrible spring and autumn phenomenon; offerings too of those who went from Villequier or Caudebec to Le Havre to seek their fortune on the high seas. Everywhere the eye rested on some proof of trust and love.

They rose up from prayer and went back to the road.

"I leave thee here, then," said Madame Vagnon. "Thou wilt certainly bring Henriette?"

Nicole nodded and went on to Caudebec at a much quicker pace than she had kept with her mother. When at last she reached the Quai, with its double avenue, she paused beneath the lofty elm trees; she felt a strange unwillingness to be seen alone in Caudebec on the last Sunday before her marriage day.

"But I ought not to think of myself; I have only happiness before me; and how lonely my mother and *la tante* will be! Ah! if they would but live together always!"

Nicole sighed; she knew that her wish was impracticable. Henriette was too independent and Madame Vagnon was too imperious for such an arrangement. Nicole went on quickly along the Quai; there were a few idlers walking up and down, but no one heeded the girl as she passed on to the room which her

aunt rented behind the baker's shop in front of the river. The shop front had rows of long loaves, kept in place by stout wires, and beneath them, on a shelf raised from the ground, were scarlet and white geraniums. A girl was watering these out of a blue-and-grey pitcher.

"*Bon jour*, Francine," Nicole looked shy under the girl's questioning glance. "Is my Aunt Henriette indoors?"

"But no, *mam'selle*. Henriette has gone for a walk—a too long walk this afternoon; she will be tired to death when she returns, but she would go. She has gone to the *chapelle* of St.-Saturnin."

"St.-Saturnin! But it is a folly. If I can make sure by which road she will return I will go and meet her."

Francine shrugged her shoulders. "For that there is no saying. The path beside the river is longest, but then it is the least steep. If I were in the place of *mam'selle*, I should wait here."

In the uncertainty—for she might miss her aunt by taking the wrong road—Nicole went into the little room and waited. She had often been in the room before, but it seemed to-day to be invested with a new interest. She looked round the white panelled walls and thought how tired her aunt must grow of their sameness.

"Every day is alike to her," she murmured, "unless it be the change from washing to ironing, or to the mending she does so neatly; and that clock on the mantelshelf ticks on all day and all night, and those vases of flowers on each side it, never change. I wonder she can bear it. Perhaps Aunt Henriette never loved any one, and so her life has always been a monotone. But yet she is so kind to me, she has so much true sympathy—surely she has loved."

Nicole knew that her aunt's pilgrimage to St.-Saturnin was made for her. St.-Saturnin was the Loretto of Caudebec. She looked round the room again. There was literally nothing to arrest the eye with any feeling of pleasure or curiosity.

She had never before so wearied of the colourless monotony of her aunt's room. Every moment she grew duller and more dispirited, and yet, looking back after a few hours, those same wearied feelings seemed bliss compared to the sharp revelation that was even now waiting for her.

Nicole waited an hour and then the weary restlessness mastered her will. She went to the door and opened it.

"Francine," she called; but Francine had been nodding and smiling at Alexis Lefort, the good-looking *confiseur* of Caudebec, and her heart and eyes and ears also were now engrossed by him as he disappeared under the avenue.

Francine had put her hand up to shade her staring blue eyes from the glare of the sun, setting now behind Villequier; she stood blocking up the entrance, so that Nicole had to lay her hand on the girl's broad shoulder before she could attract her notice. Francine started and her red face grew redder; she was vexed that Nicole should surprise her.

"Monsieur Jules is gone with Floris Mercœur to La Mailleraye," she said in a teasing voice; but Nicole passed on, though the girl's words stung her.

"If my aunt should return," she said, "you will say I went along the lower road to St.-Wandrille to meet her. I shall come back."

IV.

MORE than an hour went by. Francine sallied forth in her best Sunday cap and her new brown and black striped gown, to pay a visit of ceremony at the Gendarmerie, to a newly wedded pair, a gendarme who had married her cousin a few days before.

"I shall have to visit Nicole next—poor Nicole! I don't envy her"—this was said with smiling disdain on her full red lips; for Francine still fancied that Jules Barrière's visits were as much for herself as for the niece of her father's lodger.

The sky clouded over, so that evening came on early. It was no longer broad daylight when Nicole came hurrying on to the Quai again. She was flushed and out of breath and she looked round to see if there were any one near to question. Only for an instant. Nicole was as eagle-eyed as her mother was, and she saw at once that there was no one who could give her the tidings she sought.

She went into the baker's shop. The key of her aunt's room was still hanging on the peg on which she had placed it.

"What can have happened?" Nicole asked herself. She had gone along the road leading to St.-Wandrille, until she felt sure that her aunt must be on her return from St.-Saturnin, a little chapel on the wooded heights behind the ruined monastery; and then she had decided that Henriette had taken the upper road, and was perhaps even now waiting for her in the little parlour.

What was to be done? Nicole felt that she could not go home and leave her aunt's fate uncertain; for it seemed to her that some accident had happened to Henriette; and yet — she looked at the fast fading light, and thought of the dark lonely road which lay between her and the Maison Blanche. She stood with her lips firmly set and her hands clasped together, trying to decide. All at once there flashed across her mental sight the old inscription over the inner doorway of her house, which one of her ancestors had caused to be set there. The inscription was defaced now, almost obliterated, but Nicole knew it by heart —

Fais ce que dois, advienne que pourra.

She turned round at once, and took the way to the upper road to St-Wandrille.

She had to skirt the town to reach this, but she was soon clear of houses, excepting villas, which came at intervals, and which were placed among orchards some way back from the road. After a bit these disappeared; there was only the lofty wooded hill on one side and the sloping green descent to the river on the other.

Just where two ways met was a grey pillar, and on the top a round slab of stone, engraven with a cross. Nicole had been used to look on this with reverence. It was the cross of the Knights of St-John; and in the old times, every Friday the monks of St-Wandrille brought here from the monastery *pain chétif* for the poor of Caudebec. A tree overhung the cross, and deepened the gloom which lay over the road.

Nicole's eyes rested mechanically on the pillar, and a groan startled her. She saw some object beside it. She went up timidly, and a faint voice asked for help.

It was her aunt Henriette, sitting at the foot of the old monument. She looked up at her niece and smiled.

"This is good fortune! I have sprained my foot over a stone, Nicole. I dragged on a little way, and then I could get no farther, and thou art the first passer-by who has heard my cry for help."

Nicole raised her aunt but the pain in the sprained foot had grown into sharp agony, and it was a long and wearisome task for the two women to get to Caudebec. By the time they reached the houses Nicole's strength had fled. It seemed to her that she could no longer support the poor bent sufferer's weight. A cheery voice hailed her. A short round woman, sitting at the open door of her cottage,

with a background of bright-coloured plates on a rack behind her, nodded her head at the sight of the aunt and niece.

"*Ah, mon Dieu!* What is it then, Nicole Vagnon? What has thus chanced to *la tante?*"

Nicole told her story, and Madame Tretin bustled forward with a rush-bottomed chair.

"*Tiens! tiens!* but she must not walk. You should have left her and come on for help. See; there is the fruit board I use for the market, and my grandson Pierre, who plays with his cats yonder, shall help Mam'selle Henriette onto it, and wheel her to the Quai. *Allons; n'y a pas de quoi, Nicole.*"

This was in reply to the abundant thanks lavished on her by Nicole; but Madame Tretin's deeds were as nimble as her words, and much sooner than she could have hoped, Nicole had placed her aunt in safety on Henriette's own little bed.

"Thou must return at once, my child, to the Maison Blanche," the lame woman said quickly.

Nicole looked perplexed, but Francine pushed forward with her arms akimbo. She tossed her head back, and there was as much of suppressed impatience as of sympathy in her round blue eyes.

"Yes, yes! But yes, Mam'selle Henriette is right; it is too dark for delay, and it is possible, Nicole, if we try hard we may manage to supply your place."

Nicole flushed under the girl's sneer, but she did not answer. She bent down and kissed her aunt, promised to return next morning, and started on her lonely walk.

"What a self-deceiver I am!" she thought. "I said I had done with pride forever, and yet in my heart I know that I think I could take better care of *la tante* than Francine can, or why should I be so vexed at her words?" She was very heavy-hearted. Jules had broken faith; he had gone out again with Floris Mercœur; and now she was deprived of Henriette's advice and sympathy.

Her reflections came to a sudden ending. She had walked very fast, and had not noticed how far she had progressed on her way. Two men came into the road from the river bank, and Nicole knew that she must have reached the turning in which the little chapel stood. The men did not advance towards her, but the opening down to the river made the road light where they stood, while she was still in the shadow of the trees. Nicole saw

that they were Jules and Floris Mercœur.

Before she had time to speak, Jules rushed forward, caught her round the waist, and tried to kiss her.

"*Ma belle !*" — his voice was thick and unnatural — "the demoiselles who walk late must pay toll."

"Jules !"

The deep passionate reproach in her voice seemed to stun him. He loosed his hold and stood still, while Nicole hurried rapidly on towards the *Maison Blanche*.

Rapidly? Her feet seemed hardly to touch the ground. She fled as if fiends were in pursuit; and so they were. Anger, mortification, disgust, almost loathing, were striving to fill her heart. She wed a man who could so degrade himself as to insult a defenceless woman on the high road! — the Nicole knew that Jules had not at first recognized her.

She would tell her mother, and she would never see Jules again.

But the sweet forbearance which her mother's imperious temper and Aunt Henriette's counsel and example had taught came to help Nicole; and as the inward tumult stilled her love came back. She shrank from it, it was so changed. Something had gone away from it, Nicole could not tell what. She tried not to judge Jules; she told herself this might be a first fault. "Have I never sinned in pride and temper," she said, "that I should dare to condemn?" But these thoughts could not comfort her. Nicole knew, though she had fought against receiving it as a belief, that she had dreaded Jules' weakness: now it seemed, as she tried to think of him as a husband, that she must learn to rely on self. She could never know the blind clinging trust so dear to a true woman. She must always love Jules, he was in her heart for evermore, but her blind worship had departed. She would have to think and act and plan. That oneness which she had dreamed of had faded from her future; her fears had become a fact, her doubts a reality. Jules had not the power to resist temptation.

"But he need never know the change I suffer." The tears streamed down her pale face. "After all, it is the Cross offered me; shall I not bear it? I thought a wife's happiness would lie in perfect reverence for her husband's superior wisdom, and I am not to have this. It may be that I was making an idol of Jules, and this is sent to punish me. No, I will say nothing."

"*Eh bien*" — Madame Vagnon had listened quietly to the story of Henriette's accident after her first exclamation of surprise — "it would have been wiser to get Mère Tretin's grandson to walk home with thee. It is fortunate thou didst not meet with annoyances on the road."

Madame Vagnon was sitting in the fire-light, and it did not cast much glow into the great dark room — Nicole's deep blush passed unnoticed.

At the frugal supper of radishes and bread and pears, Nicole scarcely spoke. "I am very tired," she had said, and as Madame Vagnon was in a talkative mood it was easy to escape remark.

But Madame Vagnon did not fall asleep quickly though she got to bed much quicker than Nicole did, and she watched her daughter with anxiety.

She saw that Nicole knelt much longer than usual in prayer, and that once she suppressed a deep shuddering sob; and when the girl at last lay down in the small bed opposite her own, the mother grew more troubled as she saw the restless turning from side to side and then the sudden start from a beginning of slumber.

Madame Vagnon was an excellent mother in all practical ways; but she would have considered it a sentimental waste of time to ponder over the source of her daughter's agitation. "She is troubled about her aunt, is my Nicole; she has so tender a heart." And Madame fell asleep and snored while her daughter lay with widely-opened eyes, trying to decide on her future.

In the sudden recoil from her own unaccustomed vehemence Nicole had forgiven Jules, and had determined in a martyr-like spirit to take up the cross which she believed was laid upon her married life; but on her knees, in earnest recollected prayer, this exalted mood left her. She saw Jules' fault clearly. An irresistible conviction oppressed her. Rumours of his evil habit had reached her before, and it seemed to her that in his position, as master of the *Hôtel du Quai*, a cure was hopeless. With this conviction came a more real estimate of herself. Who was she — a weak sinful girl, that she should elect to lead the life of a martyr? — she who had been provoked to vexation by Francine's sneer, was it likely that she could endure patiently and uncomplainingly the sight of a husband's degradation? "I should make his misery as well as my own. I should never trust, and Jules would learn to dis-

like me. I will tell him myself that our marriage cannot be."

She cried bitterly over this sacrifice of her hopes; but it was for Jules' happiness even more than her own, and when she rose up next morning she felt stronger and more resigned.

From The Saturday Review.

THE OLD CATHOLIC CONGRESS AT CONSTANCE.

THE third Old Catholic Congress, which closed its sittings on Tuesday last, derives a peculiar interest from the place and the period of its assemblage. The first had met in 1871 at Munich, responding to the challenge thrown down to Catholic Germany in Dr. Döllinger's famous manifesto; the second, last year at Cologne, when the movement originating in Bavaria had spread to the North and was making itself felt in the very heart of the Catholic Rhineland. This time the scene has again been shifted from North to South; but instead of returning to Munich, the Congress has migrated, in view of the extending area of the constituency it represents, to the confines of Switzerland. Hardly any Swiss deputies were present last September at Cologne; but since then the progress of the movement has been so rapid, especially in the dioceses of Basle and Geneva, that already several parishes have passed into the hands of the Old Catholics, and a preliminary Conference was held on the 31st of August at Olten, as well to select representatives in compliance with an invitation issued by the Central Committee to attend the approaching Congress, as to discuss plans of national Church organization and the erection of a national bishopric. There was, therefore, a local as well as historical fitness in the selection of Constance this year as the place of meeting, and the vast *Conciliums-Saal* on the shore of the Lake, named from the great reforming Council of the fifteenth century which sat within its walls, afforded every facility for the purpose. Nor was the time less significant than the place of assembling. At the two previous Congresses the movement was passing through a tentative phase, and it has only within the last few weeks completed its essential organization—for much, of course, still remains to be done—by the election and consecration of a Bishop. Just before

this last event the venerable Archbishop of Utrecht, who occupied so conspicuous a place at Cologne, had passed away, and the Anglican prelates who were then present have been obliged this year to content themselves with expressing their sympathy by letter. But their absence was evidently felt to be more than compensated by the appearance of Bishop Reinkens, who met with a most enthusiastic reception. Two American prelates, Bishop Doane of Albany and Dr. Lynam, Bishop-elect of North Carolina, were present, and the Archbishop of Syra and Bishop of Haarlem wrote, like the Bishops of Winchester and Lincoln, to testify their regret at being unable to attend. All the great German leaders were there, with the exception of Döllinger, whose personal counsel was the less urgently needed as the movement has now passed beyond its theoretical stage, the principles and theological basis of Old Catholicism being already defined; and this third Congress was occupied exclusively, as the second was principally, with the settlement of practical details. The Anglican Church was represented by Dr. Howson, Dean of Chester—who has expressed in a letter to the *Guardian* his warm admiration for those "kings of men," Schulte and Bishop Reinkens—Dr. Heidenheim, English chaplain at Zurich, and several other clergymen. Dr. Michaud and Dr. Pressensé represented the Catholics and Protestants of France; two Archpriests came from Russia, and Professor Holzmann spoke for the German Protestants, or rather Rationalists, whose sympathy was of course of a very general and negative kind. Father Hyacinthe was among the deputies from Switzerland, and three ecclesiastics attended from the Church of Holland.

The order of proceeding seems to have been much the same as on previous occasions. A friendly *soirée*, at which informal addresses were made and greetings exchanged, was held on the Thursday evening; the business sittings occupied Friday and part of Saturday, and public meetings, attended by many thousands, were held on Saturday and Sunday afternoon. On Sunday morning Bishop Reinkens preached an impressive, but entirely uncontroversial, sermon to an immense congregation at High Mass at St. Augustine's Church. One innovation was made this year, by admitting ladies as guests, though not as delegates, to the sittings of the Congress; about fifty of them were present on Thursday

evening at the preliminary reception in the Council Hall, and a larger number at the dinner given to above three hundred guests on Saturday evening. Herr Wiesen, who presided on Thursday, welcomed the guests in a few graceful words, and referred to the solemn associations of the chamber in which they were assembled. The Bishop of Albany then spoke in English, to convey the greetings of the American Church, observing that he had himself proposed the address of sympathy with the movement in the General Convention. He referred to the close union between America and Germany, which would, he trusted, be cemented in the future by the more intimate bond of religious unity, and said that what chiefly struck his fellow-Churchmen in America was the combination of courage with patience and wisdom displayed by the Old Catholics, especially by their priests. The Archpriest from Moscow followed, and then Professor Holzmann, after which the Abbé Michaud delivered what is described as a speech of passionate eloquence on the position and prospects of the cause in his own country. He assured his hearers, from his own personal knowledge, that there was a large number in France, even among the clergy, who were with them at heart, but under the double pressure of ecclesiastical and civil restraints did not as yet dare to avow themselves; nor are Old Catholics permitted by the existing French law to meet for worship except in private. Dr. Heidenheim and Dean Howson then briefly conveyed to the meeting the assurance of English sympathy, the Dean claiming to speak expressly for the Bishop of Winchester. Bishop Reinkens finally responded to the many kindly greetings he had received, and expressed his confidence in the future growth of the movement under the Divine blessing which had so signally attended its course hitherto. Their organized congregations already amounted to over 50,000, whereas when he took counsel with his friends at Nuremberg in August 1870 they were but fourteen.

The real business of the Congress began on Friday morning, when Schulte was for the third time elected President and opened the proceedings by the delivery of a long and forcible address, recounting the steps taken by the Committee appointed at Cologne to provide for the election and consecration of a bishop, and their negotiations on the subject with the Archbishop of Utrecht and

Prince Bismarck, which last had been of the most friendly character, and would result in a few days in the formal recognition of Bishop Reinkens by the Prussian Government, which is now reported to have actually taken place. The speaker then reviewed the present statistics of the Old Catholic body in Germany, and showed that, while there were 22 regularly organized congregations in Prussia, 33 in Bavaria, and 27 in Baden, numbering altogether over 50,000 members, they had in fact not less than 200,000 devoted and zealous adherents in the Empire, and many more were waiting to join them. No such progress as this had been made in the early years of the Reformation, and the present movement had to fight its way in an age when Ultramontane corruption had deeply infected the Church with materialism and indifference. In Italy, according to the account given by Bonghi, two-thirds at least of the people were open infidels, while scepticism and fanaticism disputed possession of the remainder. These things should be remembered when the conventional claim of the New Catholics to "two hundred million" adherents was so glibly repeated from mouth to mouth. Letters of sympathy from foreign bishops and others were then read, and an invitation from the American Evangelical Alliance, signed by Dr. Schaff, and asking the Congress to send three representatives to a meeting to be held next month at New York. Schulte pointed out the practical difficulties in the way of complying with this suggestion at so short a notice, but a reply was drawn up giving emphatic assurances of the intention of the Old Catholics to proceed in the work of reform. The business transacted at the Congress, as we intimated just now, was of a purely practical kind. The scheme of Church law drawn up by the General Committee was adopted with slight modification, but expressly declared to be "provisional," as the present state of things, while all the episcopal sees are in the hands of infallibilists, can only be considered a transitional one, and the Old Catholic body in Germany does not claim as yet to be more than a single diocese; not a province, still less a national Church. These rules provide for the constitution of the Episcopal Synod, with the bishop at its head, consisting of all the priests under his jurisdiction, and a lay delegate for every two hundred members of the congregation. It is to meet once a year, at Whitsuntide, or

oftener if summoned by the bishop and his Council, the Council being chosen by the Synod, and consisting of four priests and five laymen, one of each order retiring every year. The bishop will be elected by the Synod, but from a list of names proposed by the Council, and he is to appoint a Vicar-General to act in his absence or during a vacancy. Every congregation is to elect its own pastors, who are to be confirmed by the bishop, but they are not to be removable, except by canonical process, and for a proved offence against the faith or discipline of the Church. Resolutions were also passed, providing funds for the education of students for the priesthood, which Bishop Reinkens declared to be a matter of pressing importance, and the more so, as Professor Knoodt and others insisted that clerical education in Germany during the last ten or fifteen years had sunk so low that "New Catholic priests" who joined the movement would not be qualified for parochial cures. The offertory collected at the English service on Sunday, where Dr. Lynam and Dean Howson officiated, was devoted to this object. There was a good deal of warm discussion on these and other practical details, as also on a proposal of Dr. Michelis, one of the most vigorous spokesmen of the movement, to take immediate action in the matter of reunion, instead of simply continuing the permanent Committee appointed last year at Cologne to deal with the subject. He wanted to have two Committees formed — one to sit at Munich, and enter into communication with the Eastern Churches, the other to sit at Bonn, and communicate with Christian bodies in the West; the two meanwhile maintaining close relations of mutual intercourse, and both alike being ready to enter into negotiations with the German clergy of different confessions. It was eventually determined to refer the matter to the Episcopal Council.

There does not seem much to call for criticism, at least from an outsider, in the measures adopted by the Congress, which were confessedly tentative and provisional, all really important questions being adjourned for the consideration of the future Synod. An official report will of course appear in due time. Meanwhile it is obvious to remark on the business-like character of the whole proceedings, and the quiet confidence and calm common-sense view of their position and duties which appear to have animated those who took part in them. Reinkens

was evidently regarded on all sides as pre-eminently fitted for his position, and it can hardly fail to conduce materially to the success of the rising community to have such a man at its head. Schulte was himself careful to explain that he considered his own responsibility for the movement almost at an end. For the last three years he has laboured indefatigably at its organization, which is now so far completed that henceforth the conduct of affairs passes into the hands of the bishop and his Synod, which is to meet next Easter. Nor did Reinkens shrink from assuming the leadership thus devolved upon him. It was observed that, while the political and national aspect of the question seemed to be uppermost for the moment in the minds of the lay speakers at the Congress, who felt the urgent practical importance of securing the recognition of the Prussian Government, the Bishop lost no opportunity of insisting on the essentially religious character of the conflict in which they were engaged. His closing speech at the public meeting on Saturday was an emphatic vindication of the popular use of the Bible. But the critical period in the history of the movement is yet to come. To destroy is always easier than to construct, and hitherto, from the necessity of the case, protest and resistance have been the order of the day. With this third Congress, which has laid the foundation of a disciplinary system, a new era opens. The work already accomplished only professes, indeed, to be elementary and provisional; but in such cases much depends on the first start. The example of Father Hyacinthe, who has already settled the question of clerical celibacy and mass in the vernacular on his own hook, so to say, is enough to show that there are some very unruly spirits among even the prominent spokesmen of the party. And although their organization is independent, and the Swiss deputies took no very prominent part in the recent Congress, there is a pretty close solidarity established now between the Old Catholics of Germany and Switzerland. Dr. Schulte reminded his hearers, with pardonable pride, of the far greater advance made in three years by the present movement than was achieved in a much longer period by Luther. There is one homely lesson, however, which may profitably be learnt from the experience of the German Reformation when once it did begin to advance, which is conveyed in the familiar proverb, *Festina lente*. As long as

men like Schulte and Reinkens are able to retain the control of affairs, there is not perhaps much danger that the warning will be forgotten.

From The Economist.

THE LESSONS OF THE AMERICAN MONETARY CRISIS.

THE events of the present monetary crisis in America, incomplete as they are, and imperfectly as they are known to us, are yet fraught with most instructive lessons. The crisis is one of the most singular which has ever occurred, because the monetary conditions in which it has happened are extremely peculiar. The American money laws are very remarkable, and there is much to be learnt from them by way of warning if not of imitation.

As is well known, the existing legal tender currency now in America is one of "greenbacks," that is to say, of inconvertible paper notes issued by the Government. They were first issued in 1862, by the Government of Mr. Lincoln, as a measure of war finance, and they have existed ever since, as it has been impossible to get rid of them. This is the ultimate currency, the only one which an unwilling person can in any manner be forced to accept. And in these greenbacks (or in specie, as to which we will speak presently), the law requires that banks in ordinary places shall hold 15 per cent. of their liabilities, and in certain principal cities, of which New York is the most important, as much as 25 per cent. The liabilities for this purpose include not only the note circulation of the banks, but the banking deposits also. The note circulation has, indeed, in another respect, an advantage over the deposits; a specie security of Government stock is lodged for them but not for the deposits, but as respects the proportion of legal tenders which it is incumbent on the bank to keep the two are on a footing strictly equal.

In England we are now well aware how a proper proportion of reserve to liabilities is to be maintained. A country which has a currency of gold or silver, needs only sufficiently to raise the rate of interest to attract those metals from the whole world. There is always enough for those who will pay the market price for them. But in the case of a currency of inconvertible paper all this is

reversed. Its nature is artificial and its quantity is strictly limited. That which the Government issues is all which there can be. Raising the rate of interest will procure no aid from abroad, for foreign nations have not, and cannot have, any supply to send. The Government of the United States, we believe, because it is anxious to raise the currency to a specie level, has for a time past consistently refused to augment the amount of greenbacks in circulation. The legal amount that can be issued is, exclusive of a sum of 44,000,000 dollars, of which it is not necessary to speak now, 336,000,000 dollars, or 65,265,000*l*, and that is the sum in actual circulation. Probably, indeed, the United States Government did not see the entire effect of their policy. Congress was very anxious that the country should not be straitened for currency. It was more ready to bear the evils of depreciated currency than to make the effort necessary to cause the currency to appreciate. In fact, we may assume that it shrank from the prospect of that effort. Before 1868 a certain reduction in the amount of the paper currency had been made by the Executive Government, but in February of that year Congress made a law prohibiting any such contraction. They feared that there might be a reduction of prices and a deficiency of money. But they did not perceive that the mere maintenance of the existing amount of paper would produce that effect as certainly though not so rapidly. But such has certainly been the fact. The price of gold in greenbacks fell from 141 in February, 1868, to 111 in April, 1870, and would doubtless have fallen still further if it had not been hindered by the large European demand for gold for German purposes. We showed at the time, in an elaborate article, that the fall in general prices had steadily kept pace with the decline in the gold premium. (*Economist*, March 26, 1870.) Nothing else in such circumstances could have happened consistently with established monetary laws. The trade and transactions of the United States are very rapidly augmenting, and they require an augmenting currency. Every "fall," for example—that is, every harvest—the amount of corn to be "moved" becomes greater and greater, and the amount of currency requisite for the necessary transactions steadily augments. In consequence prices fall, and that of gold among the rest.

All this is quite right and as it should

be. A country which depreciates its currency seems for a long time to be unusually prosperous, and has all the feeling of being so. Everybody seems to be getting richer because prices rise; money is easily obtained because the rate of interest is low. But that seeming prosperity is purchased at a great price; as soon as it becomes necessary to raise again the paper currency to the specie level the precisely opposite state of things occurs. Low prices, scarce money, and depressed trade are the proper punishment of artificial inflation and excessive paper money.

But what is not as it should be is that there should be a deficiency in the cash basis of credit. No doubt under such circumstances that deficiency is exceedingly natural. The liabilities, both on deposits and on notes, if the banks are allowed to issue them, are naturally augmenting, and they ought to retain a continually augmenting reserve of cash as a guarantee of credit and a means of liquidating those liabilities if required. Under a metallic currency this augmenting reserve can be replenished from the store of the precious metals in the whole world. But under a system of inconvertible paper of *limited amount* there is no such comprehensive field in which to seek the sources of replenishment. The means of augmentation are strictly confined to a single country and to the amount of currency issued by the Government. The difficulty of sound banking, therefore, is extreme in a country where a paper currency of fixed volume is the sole legal tender while trade is quickly extending and transactions rapidly multiplying. How are the banks to maintain their reserve of "legal tender" paper? They must bid for it against the trading community; they must raise the rate of interest both for the money which is lodged with them and for that which they lend. They must get in as much as possible and must let out as little as possible. But this is not easy in a community which is already straitened for currency, and where many transactions, which would ordinarily be profitable, are hindered or prevented by the want of it. And still less is it agreeable to the banks, for it means that they are to lessen their profits on both sides at once—that they are to pay more interest for the money they receive and lend less, and so receive interest on a smaller sum. In part this diminution of banking profit will be coun-

terbalanced by an increase in the rate which the banks charge for their loans. But it will seldom, in an extreme case, be counterbalanced completely, because the amount of the loans on which the Banks charge is always less than that of the deposits on which they pay. The process is one of torture to the customers of the bank, and of disputable profit, possibly even of loss, to the bank itself, and therefore it is a process very rarely set into full action. A time of rapidly appreciating currency is always likely to be one of deficient bank reserves, and, therefore, of unsteady credit; and it is more likely to be so when the currency so appreciating is an artificial currency peculiar to the particular country where the depreciation happens, and not a natural currency used by and capable of being supplied from the whole world. The American law, which prescribes the amount of banking reserve which particular banks are to keep, attempts to solve this difficulty. If it could be maintained and acted on, banks would always be obliged to begin this process, however difficult, and their customers would be obliged to endure it, however painful. In that case there would always be an ample reserve. But, in fact, it cannot be observed. We showed in December last year that the reserve then held by the New York banks was not as much as the law required. The deficiency was not great, but the principle was important, it showed the difficulty of maintaining the law. By the last account which has reached Europe in detail the comparison of liabilities and reserve was as follows:—

		LIABILITIES.	
		\$	£
Deposits . .	212,772,000	39,008,000*	
Circulation . .	27,355,000	5,015,000	
Total . .	240,127,000	44,023,000	
Against a reserve of —			
Specie . .	21,767,000	3,991,000	
Legal tenders . .	38,679,000	7,091,000	
Total . .	60,446,000	11,082,000	

—which is just within the mark. But there is this unfortunate peculiarity about it, "Specie" is more than one-third of the reserve, and specie is of no use in time of panic. Gold has a high and fluctuating premium as compared with paper; if a bank were to begin to pay its liabilities in specie, it would be

* Converting the dollar at 3s 8d.

drained of its specie immediately. If for a 100*l* debt contracted and by law required to be repaid only in paper, the bank were to pay 100*l* in gold—gold being at a premium fluctuating from 10 to 16—the bank would be giving a bonus of from 10 to 16 per cent. as a favour to those of its customers who joined in a run upon it. It would not be repaying its debts, it would be overpaying them; and any bank or system of banks which in so absurd a manner stimulated a demand upon it could not last long, however strong it might be. The real condition of the New York banks by their last published return was, that they were just, and only just, within their legal limit of reserve, but that a large part of that reserve was held in a form which would make it useless if it was ever wanted.

The danger of such a state of things to the credit of the New York banks is plain. A law which prescribes a compulsory limit of reserve must always be subject to very grave objections. The moment the banks approach the legal limit the public begins to take alarm. The law having said that such and such a proportion was necessary as a basis for credit, the public naturally take the law as a guide for their opinion, and strongly suspect that there may be something wrong when that proportion is in any danger of being infringed. We can well imagine, if in this country the banking department of the Bank of England were to be required to keep, say, a fixed proportion of the liabilities in cash, how feverish would be the state of opinion, and how critical the public credit, if there were only 2 or 300,000*l* between the actual cash and the legal limit. And a law of this nature has the inevitable absurdity in it, that if you say that, "as a precaution against panic, banks must always keep a fixed proportion of their liabilities in reserve," you are in fact saying that in a panic the Bank shall not use that "proportion" to meet the liabilities; if you lock it up by law at all times, you lock it up as much at the time at which it is wanted as at any other. And by allowing part of the reserve to be in specie the American law has this maximum of inconsistency in it—that the reserve which it prescribes for a panic in part cannot be used for a panic from its own nature. If Government issued "a letter of licence," and suspended the legal enactment, yet so much of the reserve as is held in specie could not be

used in a panic without being a bounty on that panic and a premium on its continuance.

What will be the end of the run on the New York banks, of which we give the particulars elsewhere, it would be very premature to foretell, but there is already enough evidence to show that its history will strongly confirm two great maxims of economical science. First,—that a currency of inconvertible paper is among the greatest of possible evils to a country which begins it, and that in a rapidly progressive country even a fixed amount of such currency works an amount of harm which never could have been imagined beforehand. Secondly,—that the interference of Government with the trade of banking is as sure to work mischief as its interference with any other trade; that the mischief will be often of the very kind which Government meant to prevent, and that in trying to prevent a run it incurs great risk of causing and encouraging one.

From The Spectator.

VICTOR EMANUEL'S RECEPTION IN VIENNA AND BERLIN.

APART from the extraordinary picturesqueness of the event—which, as it were, ends an Italian cycle, stretching from the day when the King of Piedmont swore to avenge his father and to maintain the Statuto, to the day when he was received as an honoured equal by the Emperor of Germany—the journey of Victor Emanuel has evidently had one result of moment. No treaties have been signed, no agreements interchanged, and no offensive and defensive alliances have been contracted, either with Vienna or Berlin; but the world has been made to understand that the Papacy, in its great struggle with modern ideas, must rely on its spiritual force alone. The use of material force on its behalf would, it is clear, be resisted by the whole force of Germany, Austria, and Italy, three Powers whose military relationship is of a most close, though little perceived order. So complete is now the railway communication in mid-Europe, that a train of artillery could be sent from Dantzic to Naples without changing trucks, and on a line absolutely inaccessible to an enemy who has not first fought and won a pitched battle. So long as Germany, Austria, and Italy are agreed, it is doubtful if the

whole Catholic world could get an army to Rome without crushing three kingdoms first, for a rush from Civita Vecchia would be a mere sacrifice of 50,000 men to the forces which a week afterwards would be gathering round them. This situation, which is explicitly recognized by both the French Government and the Comte de Chambord, makes Italy absolutely impregnable for the time, and must of itself tend to moderate those Ultramontane aspirations which were considered not many weeks ago likely to end in a religious war. They cannot be gratified till the world is changed, and Rome, apart from her spiritual forces, must either reconcile herself with Italy, accepting Capri or Elba as the seat of her great ecclesiastical establishments, or wait in patience the operation of causes which *may* break up the standing league against the Temporal Power, or *may*, on the other hand, make its extinction one of those accepted facts which, like the sovereignty of Turkey over Jerusalem, Christendom does not like, but never dreams of annulling. Italy is at liberty to go on with her work, which in a quarter of a century ought to make her powerful enough to be regardless of alliances, and to stand alone, defended only by the millions who, having passed through military discipline, have become at once patriots and riflemen. Time is all to Italy, and she will now survive without effort the spasm of Ultramontane feeling passing over France and Belgium. The population once safe, all is safe, for the spiritual assault, irresistible by Bismarck's merely secular laws, breaks helplessly against the force, equally spiritual, which we call patriotism. The last hope of restoring England by force to Catholicism died away when Elizabeth dared to trust the destruction of the Armada to the Catholic Lord Howard of Effingham. Italian can hardly become more fervently and utterly Catholic than Victor Emanuel is, though, like our own James II., his private life needs a good deal of absolution; and he

is the civil spear-head of the resistance to the civil pretensions to the Papacy. Suppose all Italians to be as he is, and Italy, however Catholic, would still be free, and still seated in her own capital city.

It is stated that although on all other points, official and secular, agreement was avoided, certain resolves were taken by all three Courts to act with decision on a subject of ecclesiastical importance. It appears to be clearly understood that no novel method of election to the Papacy will be allowed any validity whatever, and that by means which we scarcely understand, the election of a French Ultramontane Cardinal is to be absolutely prevented. There is no doubt that upon this point, on which every Italian layman, and we conceive every Italian Cardinal, thoroughly agrees with him, the King of Italy can lend to the German States most important assistance; not by the direct use of force, which would to a man of his opinions be impossible, but by the exertion of influence in the Conclave itself, an influence inseparable from his position, and exerted a hundred times over by Catholics untainted by any heresy, — by the Medici, for instance, who were not half so scrupulous as modern Catholics are all assumed to be. No other monarch has this power, and in using it Victor Emanuel may give almost a *quid pro quo* for the support of which, without treaties or documents, he and his subjects, and the Comte de Chambord and his friends, equally believe him to be so sure. The result of the visit therefore is that the grand European combination which was to split up Italy must wait till the Comte de Chambord has been King for some years, till Don Carlos has reorganized Spain, till Italy is in revolution, and till Germany, Austria, and Italy have been defeated in the field. That may prove a long time, and though Time matters nothing to the Catholic Church, time matters a great deal to the Temporal Power.

ACCORDING to Dr. Fritsch, the discovery has lately been made of lacustrine dwellings in the vicinity of Leipsic, as the result of certain engineering operations undertaken to regulate the course of the River Elster. After passing through a series of layers at a certain depth, the workmen found a series of oak piles pointed

below and decomposed above, and supporting a certain number of oak trunks placed horizontally; and on the same level with these were found certain lower jaws and teeth of oxen, fragments of antlers, broken bones of various mammals, shells of an Anodon, fragments of pottery, two polished stone hatchets, &c.